

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

No. 40.]

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 1860.

[PRICE 2d.]

THE WOMAN IN WHITE.

THE NARRATIVE OF MARIAN HALCOMBE.
TAKEN FROM HER DIARY.

* * * * *
Limmeridge House, November 7th.

THIS morning, Mr. Gilmore left us.

His interview with Laura had evidently grieved and surprised him more than he liked to confess. I felt afraid, from his look and manner when we parted, that she might have inadvertently betrayed to him the real secret of her depression and of my anxiety. This doubt grew on me so, after he had gone, that I declined riding out with Sir Percival, and went up to Laura's room instead.

I have been sadly distrustful of myself, in this difficult and lamentable matter, ever since I found out my own ignorance of the strength of Laura's unhappy attachment. I ought to have known that the delicacy and forbearance and sense of honour which drew me to poor Hart-right, and made me so sincerely admire and respect him, were just the qualities to appeal most irresistibly to Laura's natural sensitiveness and natural generosity of nature. And yet, until she opened her heart to me of her own accord, I had no suspicion that this new feeling had taken root so deeply. I once thought time and care might remove it. I now fear that it will remain with her and alter her for life. The discovery that I have committed such an error in judgment as this, makes me hesitate about everything else. I hesitate about Sir Percival, in the face of the plainest proofs. I hesitate even in speaking to Laura. On this very morning, I doubted, with my hand on the door, whether I should ask her the questions I had come to put, or not.

When I went into her room, I found her walking up and down in great impatience. She looked flushed and excited; and she came forward at once, and spoke to me before I could open my lips.

"I wanted you," she said. "Come and sit down on the sofa with me. Marian! I can bear this no longer—I must and will end it."

There was too much colour in her cheeks, too

† The passages omitted, here and elsewhere, in Miss Halcombe's Diary, are only those which bear no reference to Miss Fairlie or to any of the persons with whom she is associated in these pages.

much energy in her manner, too much firmness in her voice. The little book of Hartright's drawings—the fatal book that she will dream over whenever she is alone—was in one of her hands. I began by gently and firmly taking it from her, and putting it out of sight on a side-table.

"Tell me quietly, my darling, what you wish to do," I said. "Has Mr. Gilmore been advising you?"

She shook her head. "No, not in what I am thinking of now. He was very kind and good to me, Marian,—and I am ashamed to say I distressed him by crying. I am miserably helpless; I can't control myself. For my own sake and for all our sakes, I must have courage enough to end it."

"Do you mean courage enough to claim your release?" I asked.

"No," she said, simply. "Courage, dear, to tell the truth."

She put her arms round my neck, and rested her head quietly on my bosom. On the opposite wall hung the miniature portrait of her father. I bent over her, and saw that she was looking at it while her head lay on my breast.

"I can never claim my release from my engagement," she went on. "Whatever way it ends, it must end wretchedly for me. All I can do, Marian, is not to add the remembrance that I have broken my promise and forgotten my father's dying words, to make that wretchedness worse."

"What is it you propose, then?" I asked.

"To tell Sir Percival Glyde the truth, with my own lips," she answered, "and to let him release me, if he will, not because I ask him, but because he knows all."

"What do you mean, Laura, by 'all'?" Sir Percival will know enough (he has told me so himself) if he knows that the engagement is opposed to your own wishes."

"Can I tell him that, when the engagement was made for me by my father, with my own consent? I should have kept my promise; not happily, I am afraid; but still contentedly"—she stopped, turned her face to me, and laid her cheek close against mine—"I should have kept my engagement, Marian, if another love had not grown up in my heart, which was not there when I first promised to be Sir Percival's wife."

"Laura! you will never lower yourself by making a confession to him?"

"I shall lower myself indeed, if I gain my release by hiding from him what he has a right to know."

"He has not the shadow of a right to know it!"

"Wrong, Marian, wrong! I ought to deceive no one—least of all, the man to whom my father gave me and to whom I gave myself." She put her lips to mine, and kissed me. "My own love," she said, softly, "you are so much too fond of me and so much too proud of me, that you forget in my case, what you would remember in your own. Better that Sir Percival should doubt my motives and misjudge my conduct, if he will, than that I should be first false to him in thought, and then mean enough to serve my own interests by hiding the falsehood."

I held her away from me in astonishment. For the first time in our lives, we had changed places; the resolution was all on her side, the hesitation all on mine. I looked into the pale, quiet, resigned young face; I saw the pure, innocent heart, in the loving eyes that looked back at me—and the poor, worldly cautions and objections that rose to my lips, dwindled and died away in their own emptiness. I hung my head in silence. In her place, the despicably small pride which makes so many women deceitful, would have been my pride, and would have made me deceitful, too.

"Don't be angry with me, Marian," she said, mistaking my silence.

I only answered by drawing her close to me again. I was afraid of crying if I spoke. My tears do not flow so easily as they ought—they come, almost like men's tears, with sobs that seem to tear me in pieces, and that frighten every one about me.

"I have thought of this, love, for many days," she went on, twining and twisting my hair, with that childish restlessness in her fingers, which poor Mrs. Vesey still tries so patiently and so vainly to cure her of—"I have thought of it very seriously, and I can be sure of my courage, when my own conscience tells me I am right. Let me speak to him to-morrow—in your presence, Marian. I will say nothing that is wrong, nothing that you or I need be ashamed of—but, oh, it will ease my heart so to end this miserable concealment! Only let me know and feel that I have no deception to answer for on my side; and then, when he has heard what I have to say, let him act towards me as he will."

She sighed, and put her head back in its old position on my bosom. Sad misgivings about what the end would be, weighed on my mind; but, still distrusting myself, I told her that I would do as she wished. She thanked me, and we passed gradually into talking of other things.

At dinner she joined us again, and was more easy and more herself with Sir Percival, than I have seen her yet. In the evening she went to the piano, choosing new music of the dexterous, tuneless, florid kind. The lovely old melodies of Mozart, which poor Hartright was so fond of, she has never played since he left. The book is no longer in the music-stand. She took the

volume away herself, so that nobody might find it out and ask her to play from it.

I had no opportunity of discovering whether her purpose of the morning had changed or not, until she wished Sir Percival good night—and then her own words informed me that it was unaltered. She said, very quietly, that she wished to speak to him, after breakfast, and that he would find her in her sitting-room with me. He changed colour at those words, and I felt his hand trembling a little when it came to my turn to take it. The event of the next morning would decide his future life; and he evidently knew it.

I went in, as usual, through the door between our two bedrooms, to bid Laura good night before she went to sleep. In stooping over her to kiss her, I saw the little book of Hartright's drawings half hidden under her pillow, just in the place where she used to hide her favourite toys when she was a child. I could not find it in my heart to say anything; but I pointed to the book and shook my head. She reached both hands up to my cheeks, and drew my face down to hers till our lips met.

"Leave it there, to-night," she whispered; "to-morrow may be cruel, and may make me say good-by to it for ever."

8th.—The first event of the morning was not of a kind to raise my spirits; a letter arrived for me, from poor Walter Hartright. It is the answer to mine, describing the manner in which Sir Percival cleared himself of the suspicions raised by Anne Catherick's letter. He writes shortly and bitterly about Sir Percival's explanations; only saying that he has no right to offer an opinion on the conduct of those who are above him. This is sad; but his occasional references to himself grieve me still more. He says that the effort to return to his old habits and pursuits, grows harder instead of easier to him, every day; and he implores me, if I have any interest, to exert it to get him employment that will necessitate his absence from England, and take him among new scenes and new people. I have been made all the readier to comply with this request, by a passage at the end of his letter, which has almost alarmed me.

After mentioning that he has neither seen nor heard anything of Anne Catherick, he suddenly breaks off, and hints in the most abrupt, mysterious manner, that he has been perpetually watched and followed by strange men, ever since he returned to London. He acknowledges that he cannot prove this extraordinary suspicion by fixing on any particular persons; but he declares that the suspicion itself is present to him night and day. This has frightened me, because it looks as if his one fixed idea about Laura was becoming too much for his mind. I will write immediately to some of my mother's influential old friends in London, and press his claims on their notice. Change of scene and change of occupation may really be the salvation of him at this crisis in his life.

Greatly to my relief, Sir Percival sent an

apology for not joining us at breakfast. He had taken an early cup of coffee in his own room, and he was still engaged there in writing letters. At eleven o'clock, if that hour was convenient, he would do himself the honour of waiting on Miss Fairlie and Miss Halcombe.

My eyes were on Laura's face while the message was being delivered. I had found her unaccountably quiet and composed on going into her room in the morning; and so she remained all through breakfast. Even when we were sitting together on the sofa in her room, waiting for Sir Percival, she still preserved her self-control.

"Don't be afraid of me, Marian," was all she said: "I may forget myself with an old friend like Mr. Gilmore, or with a dear sister like you; but I will not forget myself with Sir Percival Glyde."

I looked at her, and listened to her in silent surprise. Through all the years of our close intimacy, this passive force in her character had been hidden from me—hidden even from herself, till love found it, and suffering called it forth.

As the clock on the mantelpiece struck eleven, Sir Percival knocked at the door, and came in. There was suppressed anxiety and agitation in every line of his face. The dry, sharp cough, which teases him at most times, seemed to be troubling him more incessantly than ever. He sat down opposite to us at the table; and Laura remained by me. I looked attentively at them both, and he was the palest of the two.

He said a few unimportant words, with a visible effort to preserve his customary ease of manner. But his voice was not to be steadied, and the restless uneasiness in his eyes was not to be concealed. He must have felt this himself; for he stopped in the middle of a sentence, and gave up even the attempt to hide his embarrassment any longer.

There was just one moment of dead silence before Laura addressed him.

"I wish to speak to you, Sir Percival," she said, "on a subject that is very important to us both. My sister is here, because her presence helps me, and gives me confidence. She has not suggested one word of what I am going to say: I speak from my own thoughts, not from hers. I am sure you will be kind enough to understand that, before I go any farther?"

Sir Percival bowed. She had proceeded thus far, with perfect outward tranquillity, and perfect propriety of manner. She looked at him, and he looked at her. They seemed, at the outset at least, resolved to understand one another plainly.

"I have heard from Marian," she went on, "that I have only to claim my release from our engagement, to obtain that release from you. It was forbearing and generous on your part, Sir Percival, to send me such a message. It is only doing you justice to say that I am grateful for the offer; and I hope and believe that it is only doing myself justice to tell you that I decline to accept it."

His attentive face brightened and relaxed; he

seemed to breathe more freely. But I saw one of his feet, softly, quietly, incessantly beating on the carpet under the table; and I felt that he was secretly as anxious as ever.

"I have not forgotten," she said, "that you asked my father's permission before you honoured me with a proposal of marriage. Perhaps, you have not forgotten, either, what I said when I consented to our engagement? I ventured to tell you that my father's influence and advice had mainly decided me to give you my promise. I was guided by my father, because I had always found him the truest of all advisers, the best and fondest of all protectors and friends. I have lost him now; I have only his memory to love; but my faith in that dear dead friend has never been shaken. I believe, at this moment, as truly as I ever believed, that he knew what was best, and that his hopes and wishes ought to be my hopes and wishes too."

Her voice trembled, for the first time. Her restless fingers stole their way into my lap, and held fast by one of my hands. There was another moment of silence; and then Sir Percival spoke.

"May I ask," he said, "if I have ever proved myself unworthy of the trust, which it has been hitherto my greatest honour and greatest happiness to possess?"

"I have found nothing in your conduct to blame," she answered. "You have always treated me with the same delicacy and the same forbearance. You have deserved my trust; and, what is of far more importance in my estimation, you have deserved my father's trust, out of which mine grew. You have given me no excuse, even if I had wanted to find one, for asking to be released from my pledge. What I have said so far, has been spoken with the wish to acknowledge my whole obligation to you. My regard for that obligation, my regard for my father's memory, and my regard for my own promise, all forbid me to set the example, on my side, of withdrawing from our present position. The breaking of our engagement must be entirely your wish and your act, Sir Percival—not mine."

The uneasy beating of his foot suddenly stopped; and he leaned forward eagerly across the table.

"My act?" he said. "What reason can there be, on my side, for withdrawing?"

I heard her breath quickening; I felt her hand growing cold. In spite of what she had said to me, when we were alone, I began to be afraid of her. I was wrong.

"A reason that it is very hard to tell you," she answered. "There is a change in me, Sir Percival—a change which is serious enough to justify you, to yourself and to me, in breaking off our engagement."

His face turned so pale again, that even his lips lost their colour. He raised the arm which lay on the table; turned a little away in his chair; and supported his head on his hand, so that his profile only was presented to us.

"What change?" he asked.

She sighed heavily, and leaned towards me a little, so as to rest her shoulder against mine. I felt her trembling, and tried to spare her by speaking myself. She stopped me by a warning pressure of her hand, and then addressed Sir Percival once more; but, this time, without looking at him.

"I have heard," she said, "and I believe it, that the fondest and truest of all affections is the affection which a woman ought to bear to her husband. When our engagement began, that affection was mine to give, if I could, and yours to win, if you could. Will you pardon me, and spare me, Sir Percival, if I acknowledge that it is not so any longer?"

A few tears gathered in her eyes, and dropped over her cheeks slowly, as she paused and waited for his answer. He did not utter a word. At the beginning of her reply, he had moved the hand on which his head rested, so that it hid his face. I saw nothing but the upper part of his figure at the table. Not a muscle of him moved. The fingers of the hand which supported his head were dented deep in his hair; but there was no significant trembling in them. There was nothing, absolutely nothing, to tell the secret of his thoughts at that moment—the moment which was the crisis of his life and the crisis of hers.

I was determined to make him declare himself, for Laura's sake.

"Sir Percival!" I interposed, sharply; "have you nothing to say, when my sister has said so much? More, in my opinion," I added, my unlucky temper getting the better of me, "than any man alive, in your position, has a right to hear from her."

That last rash sentence opened a way for him by which to escape me if he chose; and he instantly took advantage of it.

"Pardon me, Miss Halcombe," he said, still keeping his hand over his face—"pardon me, if I remind you that I have claimed no such right."

The few plain words which would have brought him back to the point from which he had wandered, were just on my lips, when Laura checked me by speaking again.

"I hope I have not made my painful acknowledgment in vain," she continued. "I hope it has secured me your entire confidence in what I have still to say?"

"Pray be assured of it." He made that brief reply, warmly; dropping his hand on the table, while he spoke, and turning towards us again. Whatever outward change had passed over him, was gone now. His face was eager and expectant—it expressed nothing but the most intense anxiety to hear her next words.

"I wish you to understand that I have not spoken from any selfish motive," she said. "If you leave me, Sir Percival, after what you have just heard, you do not leave me to marry another man—you only allow me to remain a single woman for the rest of my life. My fault towards you has begun and ended in my own thoughts. It can never go any farther. No

word has passed——" She hesitated, in doubt about the expression she should use next; hesitated, in a momentary confusion which it was very sad and very painful to see. "No word has passed," she patiently and resolutely resumed, "between myself and the person to whom I am now referring for the first and last time in your presence, of my feelings towards him, or of his feelings towards me—no word ever can pass—neither he nor I are likely, in this world, to meet again. I earnestly beg you to spare me from saying any more, and to believe me, on my word, in what I have just told you. It is the truth, Sir Percival—the truth which I think my promised husband has a claim to hear, at any sacrifice of my own feelings. I trust to his generosity to pardon me, and to his honour to keep my secret."

"Both those trusts are sacred to me," he said, "and both shall be sacredly kept."

After answering in those terms, he paused, and looked at her, as if he was waiting to hear more.

"I have said all I wished to say," she added, quietly—"I have said more than enough to justify you in withdrawing from your engagement."

"You have said more than enough," he answered, "to make it the dearest object of my life to keep the engagement." With those words he rose from his chair, and advanced a few steps towards the place where she was sitting.

She started violently, and a faint cry of surprise escaped her. Every word she had spoken had innocently betrayed her purity and truth to a man who thoroughly understood the priceless value of a pure and true woman. Her own noble conduct had been the hidden enemy, throughout, of all the hopes she had trusted to it. I had dreaded this from the first. I would have prevented it, if she had allowed me the smallest chance of doing so. I even waited and watched, now, when the harm was done, for a word from Sir Percival that would give me the opportunity of putting him in the wrong.

"You have left it to me, Miss Fairlie, to resign you," he continued. "I am not heartless enough to resign a woman who has just shown herself to be the noblest of her sex."

He spoke with such warmth and feeling, with such passionate enthusiasm and yet with such perfect delicacy, that she raised her head, flushed up a little, and looked at him with sudden animation and spirit.

"No!" she said, firmly. "The most wretched of her sex, if she must give herself in marriage when she cannot give her love."

"May she not give it in the future," he asked, "if the one object of her husband's life is to deserve it?"

"Never!" she answered. "If you still persist in maintaining our engagement, I may be your true and faithful wife, Sir Percival—your loving wife, if I know my own heart, never!"

She looked so irresistibly beautiful as she said those brave words that no man alive could

have steeled his heart against her. I tried hard to feel that Sir Percival was to blame, and to say so; but my womanhood would pity him, in spite of myself.

"I gratefully accept your faith and truth," he said. "The least that *you* can offer is more to me than the utmost that I could hope for from any other woman in the world."

Her left hand still held mine; but her right hand hung listlessly at her side. He raised it gently to his lips—touched it with them, rather than kissed it—bowed to me—and then, with perfect delicacy and discretion, silently quitted the room.

She neither moved, nor said a word, when he was gone—she sat by me, cold and still, with her eyes fixed on the ground. I saw it was hopeless and useless to speak; and I only put my arm round her, and held her to me in silence. We remained together so, for what seemed a long and weary time—so long and so weary, that I grew uneasy and spoke to her softly, in the hope of producing a change.

The sound of my voice seemed to startle her into consciousness. She suddenly drew herself away from me, and rose to her feet.

"I must submit, Marian, as well as I can," she said. "My new life has its hard duties; and one of them begins to-day."

As she spoke, she went to a side-table near the window, on which her sketching materials were placed; gathered them together carefully; and put them in a drawer of her cabinet. She locked the drawer, and brought the key to me.

"I must part from everything that reminds me of him," she said. "Keep the key wherever you please—I shall never want it again."

Before I could say a word, she had turned away to her bookcase, and had taken from it the album that contained Walter Hartright's drawings. She hesitated for a moment, holding the little volume fondly in her hands—then lifted it to her lips and kissed it.

"Oh, Laura! Laura!" I said, not angrily, not reprovingly—with nothing but sorrow in my voice, and nothing but sorrow in my heart.

"It is the last time, Marian," she pleaded. "I am bidding it good-by for ever."

She laid the book on the table, and drew out the comb that fastened her hair. It fell, in its matchless beauty, over her back and shoulders, and dropped round her, far below her waist. She separated one long, thin lock from the rest, cut it off, and pinned it carefully, in the form of a circle, on the first blank page of the album. The moment it was fastened, she closed the volume hurriedly, and placed it in my hands.

"You write to him, and he writes to you," she said. "While I am alive, if he asks after me, always tell him I am well, and never say I am unhappy. Don't distress him, Marian—for my sake, don't distress him. If I die first, promise you will give him this little book of his drawings, with my hair in it. There can be no harm, when I am gone, in telling him that I put it there with my own hands. And say—oh,

Marian, say for me, then, what I can never say for myself—say I loved him!"

She flung her arms round my neck, and whispered the last words in my ear with a passionate delight in uttering them which it almost broke my heart to hear. All the long restraint she had imposed on herself, gave way in that first last outburst of tenderness. She broke from me with hysterical vehemence, and threw herself on the sofa, in a paroxysm of sobs and tears that shook her from head to foot.

I tried vainly to soothe her and reason with her: she was past being soothed, and past being reasoned with. It was the sad, sudden end, for us two, of this memorable day. When the fit had worn itself out, she was too exhausted to speak. She slumbered towards the afternoon; and I put away the book of drawings so that she might not see it when she woke. My face was calm, whatever my heart might be, when she opened her eyes again and looked at me. We said no more to each other about the distressing interview of the morning. Sir Percival's name was not mentioned. Walter Hartright was not alluded to again by either of us for the remainder of the day.

9th.—Finding that she was composed and like herself, this morning, I returned to the painful subject of yesterday, for the sole purpose of exploring her to let me speak to Sir Percival and Mr. Fairlie, more plainly and strongly than she could speak to either of them herself, about this lamentable marriage. She interposed, gently but firmly, in the middle of my remonstrances.

"I left yesterday to decide," she said; "and yesterday *has* decided. It is too late to go back."

Sir Percival spoke to me this afternoon, feelingly and unreservedly, about what had passed in Laura's room. He assured me that the unparalleled trust she had placed in him had awakened such an answering conviction of her innocence and integrity in his mind, that he was guiltless of having felt even a moment's unworthy jealousy, either at the time when he was in her presence, or afterwards when he had withdrawn from it. Deeply as he lamented the unfortunate attachment which had hindered the progress he might otherwise have made in her esteem and regard, he firmly believed that it had remained unacknowledged in the past, and that it would remain, under all changes of circumstance which it was possible to contemplate, unacknowledged in the future. This was his absolute conviction; and the strongest proof he could give of it was the assurance, which he now offered, that he felt no curiosity to know whether the attachment was of recent date or not, or who had been the object of it. His implicit confidence in Miss Fairlie made him satisfied with what she had thought fit to say to him, and he was honestly innocent of the slightest feeling of anxiety to hear more.

He waited, after saying those words, and looked at me. I was so conscious of my unreasonable prejudice against him—so conscious of an un-

worthy suspicion, that he might be speculating on my impulsively answering the very questions which he had just described himself as resolved not to ask—that I evaded all reference to this part of the subject with something like a feeling of confusion on my own part. At the same time, I was resolved not to lose even the smallest opportunity of trying to plead Laura's cause; and I told him boldly that I regretted his generosity had not carried him one step farther, and induced him to withdraw from the engagement altogether.

Here, again, he disarmed me by not attempting to defend himself. He would merely beg me to remember the difference there was between his allowing Miss Fairlie to give him up, which was a matter of submission only, and his forcing himself to give up Miss Fairlie, which was, in other words, asking him to be the suicide of his own hopes. Her conduct of the day before had so strengthened the unchangeable love and admiration of two long years, that all active contention against those feelings, on his part, was henceforth entirely out of his power. I must think him weak, selfish, unfeeling towards the very woman whom he idolised, and he must bow to my opinion as resignedly as he could; only putting it to me, at the same time, whether her future as a single woman, pining under an unhappily placed attachment which she could never acknowledge, could be said to promise her a much brighter prospect than her future as the wife of a man who worshipped the very ground she walked on? In the last case there was hope from time, however slight it might be—in the first case, on her own showing, there was no hope at all.

I answered him—more because my tongue is a woman's, and must answer, than because I had anything convincing to say. It was only too plain that the course Laura had adopted the day before, had offered him the advantage if he chose to take it—and that he *had* chosen to take it. I felt this at the time, and I feel it just as strongly now, while I write these lines, in my own room. The one hope left, is that his motives really spring, as he says they do, from the irresistible strength of his attachment to Laura.

Before I close my diary for to-night, I must record that I wrote to-day, in poor Hartwright's interests, to two of my mother's old friends in London—both men of influence and position. If they can do anything for him, I am quite sure they will. Except Laura, I never was more anxious about any one than I am now about Walter. All that has happened since he left us has only increased my strong regard and sympathy for him. I hope I am doing right in trying to help him to employment abroad—I hope, most earnestly and anxiously, that it will end well.

10th.—Sir Percival had an interview with Mr. Fairlie; and I was sent for to join them.

I found Mr. Fairlie greatly relieved at the prospect of the "family worry" (as he was

pleased to describe his niece's marriage) being settled at last. So far, I did not feel called on to say anything to him about my own opinion; but when he proceeded, in his most aggravatingly languid manner, to suggest that the time for the marriage had better be settled next, in accordance with Sir Percival's wishes, I enjoyed the satisfaction of assailing Mr. Fairlie's nerves with as strong a protest against hurrying Laura's decision as I could put into words. Sir Percival immediately assured me that he felt the force of my objection, and begged me to believe that the proposal had not been made in consequence of any interference on his part. Mr. Fairlie leaned back in his chair, closed his eyes, said we both of us did honour to human nature, and then repeated his suggestion, as coolly as if neither Sir Percival nor I had said a word in opposition to it. It ended in my flutly declining to mention the subject to Laura, unless she first approached it of her own accord. I left the room at once after making that declaration. Sir Percival looked seriously embarrassed and distressed. Mr. Fairlie stretched out his lazy legs on his velvet footstool; and said: "Dear Marian! how I envy you your robust nervous system! Don't bang the door!"

On going to Laura's room, I found that she had asked for me, and that Mrs. Vesey had informed her that I was with Mr. Fairlie. She inquired at once what I had been wanted for; and I told her all that had passed, without attempting to conceal the vexation and annoyance that I really felt. Her answer surprised and distressed me inexpressibly; it was the very last reply that I should have expected her to make.

"My uncle is right," she said. "I have caused trouble and anxiety enough to you, and to all about me. Let me cause no more, Marian—let Sir Percival decide."

I remonstrated warmly; but nothing that I could say moved her.

"I am held to my engagement," she replied; "I have broken with my old life. The evil day will not come the less surely because I put it off. No, Marian! once again, my uncle is right. I have caused trouble enough and anxiety enough; and I will cause no more."

She used to be pliability itself; but she was now inflexibly passive in her resignation—I might almost say in her despair. Dearly as I love her, I should have been less pained if she had been violently agitated; it was so shockingly unlike her natural character to see her as cold and insensible as I saw her now.

11th.—Sir Percival put some questions to me, at breakfast, about Laura, which left me no choice but to tell him what she had said.

While we were talking, she herself came down and joined us. She was just as unnaturally composed in Sir Percival's presence as she had been in mine. When breakfast was over, he had an opportunity of saying a few words to her privately, in a recess of one of the windows. They were not more than two or three minutes together; and, on their separating, she left the room

with Mrs. Vesey, while Sir Percival came to me. He said he had entreated her to favour him by maintaining her privilege of fixing the time for the marriage at her own will and pleasure. In reply, she had merely expressed her acknowledgments, and had desired him to mention what his wishes were to Miss Halcombe.

I have no patience to write more. In this instance, as in every other, Sir Percival has carried his point, with the utmost possible credit to himself, in spite of everything that I can say or do. His wishes are now, what they were, of course, when he first came here; and Laura having resigned herself to the one inevitable sacrifice of the marriage, remains as coldly hopeless and enduring as ever. In parting with the little occupations and relies that reminded her of Hartright, she seems to have parted with all her tenderness and all her impressibility. It is only three o'clock in the afternoon while I write these lines, and Sir Percival has left us already, in the happy hurry of a bridegroom, to prepare for the bride's reception at his house in Hampshire. Unless some extraordinary event happens to prevent it, they will be married exactly at the time when he wished to be married—before the end of the year. My very fingers burn as I write it!

12th.—A sleepless night, through uneasiness about Laura. Towards the morning, I came to a resolution to try what change of scene would do to rouse her. She cannot surely remain in her present torpor of insensibility, if I take her away from Limmeridge and surround her with the pleasant faces of old friends? After some consideration, I decided on writing to the Arnolds, in Yorkshire. They are simple, kind-hearted, hospitable people; and she has known them from her childhood. When I had put the letter in the post-bag, I told her what I had done. It would have been a relief to me if she had shown the spirit to resist and object. But no—she only said, "I will go anywhere with you, Marian. I dare say you are right—I dare say the change will do me good."

13th.—I wrote to Mr. Gilmore, informing him that there was really a prospect of this miserable marriage taking place, and also mentioning my idea of trying what change of scene would do for Laura. I had no heart to go into particulars. Time enough for them, when we get nearer to the end of the year.

14th.—Three letters for me. The first, from the Arnolds, full of delight at the prospect of seeing Laura and me. The second, from one of the gentlemen to whom I wrote on Walter Hartright's behalf, informing me that he has been fortunate enough to find an opportunity of complying with my request. The third, from Walter himself; thanking me, poor fellow, in the warmest terms, for giving him an opportunity of leaving his home, his country, and his friends. A private expedition to make excavations among the ruined cities of Central America is, it seems, about to sail from Liverpool. The draughtsman

who had been already appointed to accompany it, has lost heart, and withdrawn at the eleventh hour; and Walter is to fill his place. He is to be engaged for six months certain, from the time of the landing in Honduras, and for a year afterwards, if the excavations are successful, and if the funds hold out. His letter ends with a promise to write me a farewell line, when they are all on board ship, and when the pilot leaves them. I can only hope and pray earnestly that he and I are both acting in this matter for the best. It seems such a serious step for him to take, that the mere contemplation of it startles me. And yet, in his unhappy position, how can I expect him, or wish him, to remain at home?

15th.—The carriage is at the door. Laura and I set out on our visit to the Arnolds to-day.

* * * * *

Polesdean Lodge, Yorkshire.

23rd.—A week in these new scenes, and among these kind-hearted people, has done her some good, though not so much as I had hoped. I have resolved to prolong our stay for another week at least. It is useless to go back to Limmeridge, till there is an absolute necessity for our return.

24th.—Sad news by this morning's post. The expedition to Central America sailed on the twenty-first. We have parted with a true man; we have lost a faithful friend. Walter Hartright has left England.

25th.—Sad news yesterday: ominous news to-day. Sir Percival Glyde has written to Mr. Fairlie; and Mr. Fairlie has written to Laura and me, to recal us to Limmeridge immediately.

What can this mean? Has the day for the marriage been fixed in our absence?

THE SCHOOLMASTER ALL ABROAD.

We have Government Schoolmasters, appointed by Order in Council, "to ascertain that the candidate (for government employment) possesses the requisite knowledge and ability for the proper discharge of his official duties." Happy people that we are! The right man is to be, at last, in the right place, everywhere. Every tide-waiter shall be the model of all that a tide-waiter ought to be. No porters shall sit in those snug chairs—which look like sections of dilapidated diving-bells—in the halls of government offices, who cannot stroke their calves complacently, and defy the jealous people without to point to finer models. Temporary clerks shall, for some eighty pounds a year (to begin with), show themselves on a par with Whateley, Professor de Morgan, and Dr. Faraday. Cooley shall look up to them as geographers, and their dashing treatment of figures shall pale the fame of Cocker himself.

Three great national schoolmasters have been appointed to sweep the old dirt from the vast

and irregular stables, full of the sorry steeds that drag the state coach along, demanding very heavy mileage from John Bull. Henceforth the stables are to be as sweet as any lady's boudoir. The right men are coming to take their right places. Those good old days when members sold votes for sinecures; when the ignorant younger son of my lord always had a lucrative place ready for him; and when spelling was a vulgar accomplishment, are to disappear utterly.

Our Government Schoolmasters are wielders of vigorous lessons. Seeing the vice with which they have to deal, and which they have to root out, they come to the determination that ignorance shall no longer be a characteristic of a civil servant. Ignorance shall be stamped out of the Civil Service—except in a few cozy little departments, from which it would be sheer cruelty to drive retired colonels and cashless cadets, “of the real tap.” Our Schoolmasters are, moreover, of the rotten Civil Service themselves, and it would be asking them to exhibit more than human virtue to exact from them strong measures against the cozziness of government pigeon-holes, as select, and warm, and pleasant as the Exchequer-office. Why should Exchequer clerks be pestered with the study of history, geography, or languages? These gentlemen are on a higher level than the great mass of clerks, and, therefore, may reasonably know less. The Audit-office is under protection from knowledge, as powerful as that enjoyed by the Exchequer.

Our Government Schoolmasters have had work enough with great branches of the service. A few feathered nests for “honourables,” then, may be left, with only the shadow of an examination. Foreign Service Messengers, for instance, are usually half-pay colonels, or cousins of a great house. Would it, we are asked, be reasonable to demand that they should know more, than the first four rules of arithmetic, and, conversationally, one continental language? It is true, these dignified letter-carriers get five hundred and twenty-five pounds per annum from the date of their appointment: whereas your War-office clerk, who has made the shade of the Admirable Crichton tremble, begins his humble career with less than one hundred pounds for a salary; but then, we repeat, feathered nests must be left, as our Government Schoolmasters inform us. The clever thing is to look severely at the lower forms while you court the favour of the upper; and our Government Schoolmasters have gone to work with the lower forms without sparing the rod.

Having limited the qualifications for Inspectorships of Schools, to one of physical strength (these inspectorships being looked upon in the nature of plums belonging to the high powers that direct the Queen's government), our Schoolmasters have made up for a little convenient leniency, by raising a high wall of hard questions between poor young Tweezle of Peckham-rye—who has been undermining his constitution that he might have the honour of knowing enough geology to copy letters, and sufficient mathe-

matics to make a tolerable summary of a dull document—and the modest stool he covets in Pall-mall or in Downing-street.

Poor young ambitious Tweezle must repair to Dean's-yard, Westminster, and there answer for his command of writing, spelling, arithmetic, including vulgar and decimal fractions, English composition, précis, geography, history, and Latin, “or one foreign language.”

He is told to sit at a table; and within two hours to write “a short notice of the life and writings of the author of any well-known and standard work.” Or, if his genius be not of a biographical turn, he may suppose that a friend in Australia has asked him to describe, either the Crystal Palace or the Manchester Exhibition, and may proceed, on this supposition, to compose his essay. Or again, if he cannot tackle the Crystal Palace, he is at liberty to write an account of the present state of commerce in Great Britain.

Composition triumphantly passed, by the elaboration of an essay after the manner of Macaulay, or a descriptive masterpiece after Ruskin, ambitious Tweezle passes to précis of correspondence. Let him knock off a lucid abstract of Sir Richard Mayne's evidence before the Select Committee on Transportation. Tweezle still walks from triumph to triumph; and yet the abstract and the essay have not won his clerkship for him. Geography next stares him in the face. In two hours and a half, he must spin from point to point, from city to city, from river to river, over the habitable globe. He must describe the position—and here and there “any circumstances of interest which attach to them”—of the Hartz mountains, the Khyber Pass, Candahar, and the Oregon territory. He must state the names of the places which export the greatest quantities of palm oil, indigo, mahogany, and other articles, to England; he must draw a contrast between the physical geography of Africa and Europe—or write a minute description of France or Egypt—or again, discourse wisely on the contrasting characteristics of the European and Asiatic races. Two hours and a half are handsomely allowed to Tweezle for these extensive exhibitions of his learning.

His powers as an historian are next called into play. Let him sketch briefly, the history of the Peloponnesian war; glancing at the chief actors in it, and its results. Then, he shall review the rise and fall of Venice or Spain; the lives of three popes; the causes of the Great Rebellion in England; the characters of, say, Vespasian, Mary Queen of Scots, and Alcibiades; finally, the best and worst sovereigns of the House of Plantagenet.

Then for the necessary foreign language. If young Tweezle select Latin, he may throw off a translation from Sallust, Cæsar, or Virgil. An Inspector of Schools, with little of his time employed, requires only a good digestion and a muscular energy to entitle him to a salary of two hundred pounds a year; but poor Tweezle, whose daring eye has fallen upon a clerkship in the War-office in Pall-mall at

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eighty pounds a year, must be a learned man. Why did he not aspire to the Foreign-office, or the Colonial Land and Emigration-office, where writing, *précis*, and French are the only necessary qualifications—where even a knowledge of geography is not required? In the former office, even arithmetic is put aside.

Our Government Schoolmasters, by the help of heads of departments who select the subjects on which their clerks are to be examined, have, then, done their work completely for the War-office. But, what is the examination of a mere clerk for the War-office when compared with the final tests applied to Colonial-office clerks? Their way is blocked with awful barriers. Do they beg to be admitted, our Government Schoolmasters demand—a sketch of the history of the Greek drama; a statement of the respective merits and defects of Plato and Aristotle; the distinctive opinions of the Old, Middle, and New Academies; and, say, a “short review, or criticism, of any one Latin poet.” The wretched candidate is then set to tasks, to test his knowledge of French literature. Let him trace the influence of “The English School” on modern French literature, and inform our Schoolmasters “what are the distinguishing characteristics of the classical and romantic schools.” Unhappy the wretch who goes to Dean’s-yard with only the education which will enable him to do his duties in the Colonial-office. He must be a chemist and geologist, as well as a Roman historian and a French literary critic. Let him define the terms anticlinal, synclinal, unconformable, strike and dip. Would he serve his Queen as a Colonial clerk, let him tell his Sovereign Lady through our Schoolmasters, where are the points of division placed by geologists to separate the hypozoic, the palæozoic, the mesozoic, and the caenozoic strata; and let him exemplify the principles on which these divisions have been founded! Other geological puzzles are in store for him when he has solved the above trifles. But, will solution of these give him access to the high grades of the Colonial-office? By no means. Our Government Schoolmasters have not done with him yet. He must have something of a Faraday in him. Let him declare how much per cent. of oxygen, of sulphur, and of aluminium is contained in the anhydrous normal (or neutral) sulphate of alumina! He may yet be tripped up. The above percentages set forth accurately, will he have the goodness to tell the awful Solons of Dean’s-yard, what is meant by the “empiric,” as distinguished from the “rational,” formula of a substance; and will he please to illustrate each by means of acetic acid!

It may strike the reader that we are taking an unwarrantable liberty with his credulity; but we have the honour to assure him that the above preparatory school questions are taken from Mr. Parkinson’s Government Examination Revelations; that the questions which puzzled little Tweezle of Peckham are no fanciful questions of our own; and that there are questions in Mr. Parkinson’s book even more puzzling

and preposterous than any we have set forth. And yet the Foreign-office clerk is not required to know whether Lisbon belongs to Portugal or to the Chinese! And yet the clerks in the Judge Advocate-General’s-office, are not required by the Government Schoolmasters to have so good an education as that exacted from the messengers and office-keepers of other offices! The public’s consolation is, that if geography be not necessary to the Foreign-office clerk, whose business lies among papers relating to every part of the civilised globe, it is, according to our Government Schoolmasters, indispensable to the proper discharge of the Inland Revenue clerk’s duties—those duties being the computation of legacy duty. And at the very same time, book-keeping is not necessary, we learn, either in the Board of Trade or the Public Works Loan-office!

Poor little Tweezle of Peckham was plucked when he tried to scale the giddy height of the War-office, because he could not remember who was secretary to Henry the Second; the Hon. Leonidas Gules passed into the Board of Trade triumphantly, after an examination in Latin and Greek.

“What’s the Latin for the cocked-hats which the Roman gentlemen wore with their togas?” asked Captain Marryat’s flogging schoolmaster, long ago, in the true Civil Service Examination spirit. And our Government Schoolmasters have imitated the flogging pedant with remarkable success.

VITTORIA ACCORAMBONI.

A TRUE ITALIAN HISTORY. IN NINE CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER III. THE BROTHERS-IN-LAW.

THUS Vittoria’s three suitors had each their partisans in the family councils. The father was strong in favour of Francesco Peretti, the nephew of his uncle; the mother was desperately bent on having “the sweet prince;” and the brother of saintly morals was of opinion that most might be made out of the noble and reverend Farnese.

And what about the lovely maid herself? Did she remain aloof and fancy-free while her elders were debating her destiny? Did she take either side in the momentous question? Did she tell one lover to “ask mamma,” and the other to “speak to papa?” Or, are we to suppose that she was looked upon by her parents as an article to be disposed of, and as having no voice in the matter? If we could discover any hint that could indicate a preference on the young lady’s part at this stage of the matter, it would held to throw a light upon some subsequent parts of the story. But no word of the sort is to be found.

In this position of matters Count Claudio, finding it hopeless to bring his wife over to his opinion, and thinking that delay might prove the most dangerous of all courses, determined to exert his authority as head of the family, and Vittoria was duly married to Francesco Peretti, to the great disgust of the exemplary old Cardinal Farnese, and to the rage and fury of the

Duke of Bracciano—one of Orsini's titles, by which he is often called. To the last her mother protested, as one of the chroniclers writes, that, "for her part, she would not have preferred a future uncertain greatness for her daughter to princely grandeur present in the person of the prince, who was brother-in-law of another cardinal and prince, Ferdinando dei Medici."

Meanwhile, Vittoria was received into the Peretti family in a manner, writes the historian, which ought to have contented and made the happiness of any woman. The old Cardinal di Montalto showed her every mark of affection. Though by no means rich, he did his utmost to satisfy all her tastes and caprices. The old monk, in the words of the chronicler, "even anticipated her womanish desires for ornaments, servants, pomp, dresses, jewels, and a coach," that then rare and much-coveted apex of fashionable luxury and ostentation. Her husband, we are assured, loved her "almost madly, and quite beyond what husbands are wont to feel for their wives." Donna Camilla, Francesco Peretti's mother, and the cardinal's favourite sister, treated her with the greatest affection, and the old cardinal himself "seemed to study nothing else than to spy out her wishes, and satisfy them even before they were expressed, although they were often of a very costly nature."

Her family, too, began almost immediately to reap important advantages from the new connexion. Of her four brothers, two had favoured the wishes of his most noble and most reverend eminence the Cardinal Farnese; and the other two were of their mother's faction, warm supporters of Prince Orsini's wooing. But the winning candidate does not appear to have allowed any unkind feeling to have diminished the cordiality of his affection for his new brothers-in-law.

First, her eldest brother, Ottavio, the "young man of saintly morals," who had striven to make his sister the mistress of the sexagenarian priest, had to be provided for. He, as might perhaps have been guessed, had embraced the ecclesiastical career; and the pious and exemplary cardinal, his new uncle-in-law, lost no time in writing to the Duke of Urbino, who was their common sovereign (both Gubbio and Fermo, the Cardinal di Montalto's birthplace, being in the territory of the Dukes of Urbino), to beg him to propose Ottavio Accoramboni to the Pope for a bishopric. He was accordingly made Bishop of Fossombromi almost immediately. Of course it was easier to make a churchman's fortune than to find advancement for a layman; almost all careers of the latter category requiring, more or less, some measure of capacity for being useful on the part of those who seek promotion in them. However, when the lovely Vittoria began to sigh about poor dear Giulio, her second brother, and to fret over his want of a position, the good uncle-in-law again put his shoulder to the wheel. He could not make Giulio a bishop, but he succeeded in inducing his eminence Cardinal Sforza to take him as his "gentleman of the chamber." It would seem that brother

Giulio must have been of the Orsini faction in the matter of the wooing. But the benefits showered on the family by the unvindictive Peretti fell impartially on the supporters of either rival. The third brother, Flaminio, was a Farnese-ite. And that worthy old churchman, despite the natural disgust which he must have felt at the insulting rejection of his flattering offers to the Accoramboni family, seems to have charged himself with the fortunes of his zealous and faithful, though unsuccessful, supporter. The fourth brother still remained to be provided for; and Vittoria did not disguise from herself that the peculiar circumstances of his case in some degree increased the difficulty of placing him in an independent and honourable position. The truth was, that Marcello Accoramboni had been "a little wild." He had, indeed, given himself to the culture of that noxious plant the *avena sativa*, or wild oat, on such an extensive scale, as to have attracted the notice of the police authorities, who had strongly recommended him to sow none of his favourite plant within the walls of Rome, and, indeed, as the surest mode of securing this result, had requested him not to favour that city with his presence until specially invited. In short, Marcello Accoramboni was a bandit; and Vittoria did not venture to speak to the Cardinal di Montalto about him. The inexhaustible kindness, however, of her uncle-in-law extended itself even to this black sheep of the Accoramboni flock. Guessing all that his favourite nephew's beautiful bride would have asked if she had dared, the indulgent old cardinal protected the scapegrace from the police, connived at his visits to Rome, and suffered him, when there, to find an inviolable asylum in his own sacred palace! "And it may fairly be said," remarks the cardinal's biographer, "that by saving this man's life, he was nurturing a snake in his bosom." From which strong language it would seem that Marcello Accoramboni's differences with the law had been of a serious nature. And further, from the protection against the law accorded to such an offender by one in the position of the highly respected Cardinal di Montalto, who was designated by public opinion for the next successor to the chair of St. Peter, and who was sedulously nursing a reputation for goodness and respectability of all sorts, we may draw some noteworthy conclusions as to the general respect in which the law was then held in Rome, and the feeling of the society generally with regard to those who lived under its ban.

This fourth brother, Marcello the bandit, it must be observed, had been a violent supporter of Orsini's pretensions to his sister's hand.

And now it would seem, that if ever a young wife had reason to be contented with her lot, Vittoria should have been so. All Rome thought so, and expressed their opinions volubly enough, especially all those Roman dames and damsels who "owed it to themselves to declare that they, for their parts, had never seen anything so very wonderful about the girl, and had always

said so." And this debt to themselves they paid over and over again. For the favourite nephew of a cardinal, whom all the world fully expected to be the next pope, is a very important man in the Eternal City; and not even Roman prudence could prevent ladies' tongues from saying of him, and especially of his wife, what they owed to themselves to say.

Gregory the Thirteenth, meanwhile, was becoming visibly more and more infirm. And Vittoria's ultimate greatness seemed to be prosperously and rapidly ripening. If only, indeed, the Cardinal di Montalto should survive the reigning Pope. For the mild and gentle old man was to all appearance little less infirm than the man he was to succeed. As usual he was seen, though sadly bent by age and much troubled at times by his cough, assiduous at all his religious duties. In the consistorial meetings of the Sacred College, though constant in his attendance, and ever one of the first cardinals in his place, he took but little part in debate, having apparently no strong political opinions, and being anxious only about the punctual discharge of his own especial duties and devout practices. At mass and other public devotions he was seen constantly. And these devout exercises, it was evident, so called for the exertion of all the little strength and life he had in him, that if ever worldly schemes and ambitions had held any place in his chastened heart, they had long ago burned themselves out. As for the talk and schemes about raising him to the papacy, he would never take any part in them; and would reply to any mention of the subject only by a sad smile, and a gentle shake of the venerable old bent head, generally interrupted by a return of that distressing and ominous churchyard cough. What a pope for a nephew?

CHAPTER IV. THE WAY OF THE WORLD IN ROME.

ONE night, after the family of Francesco Peretti had retired, the household was disturbed by an impetuous knocking at the great door of the palace. And in a minute or two afterwards Catarina, the lady Vittoria's maid, came in great haste into the chamber of her master and mistress, and put a letter into the hands of the former. She supposed, she said, that it must be something of great importance, for it had been brought to the door in hot haste by Mancino, who had charged her to deliver it without a moment's delay to her master, as any loss of time would be of disastrous consequence.

Now, the man who was known by this nickname of "Mancino"—the left-handed, in English—was one Dominico di Acquaviva, a bandit, whom Peretti and his uncle the cardinal protected by affording him sometimes an asylum, when hard pressed by the police. He was a Fermo man—a fellow-countryman of the Perettis—a circumstance quite sufficient, according to the ideas and feelings of that day, to account for their protecting him against the law.

Francesco's first impulse was to tell the man to come up, that he might ask him further about his mission. But he was told that the

Mancino had gone off hurriedly as soon as ever he had given the letter. Francesco found that it was from his not too respectable brother-in-law, Marcello Accoramboni. It urged him to come to him forthwith to a certain spot on the Monte Cavallo, where he was waiting for him; adding further, that his presence was needed on an affair of the utmost importance, and of the most secret nature, in which any delay would be fatal. Peretti does not seem to have hesitated a minute about doing as he was requested. He dressed himself in all haste, girded on a sword, and ordered one single servant to be ready to attend him with a torch. But, as he was about to leave the house, his mother Cammilla threw herself in his way, and implored him not to go forth at that hour of the night. Vittoria also joined her mother-in-law, and added her supplications to her young husband not to put himself into danger. Cammilla, poor mother, clung to his knees in the extremity of her anxiety to prevent her son from accepting the strange invitation. The presence of Vittoria prevented her from saying all that she might otherwise have urged, as to the character and habits of this bandit brother-in-law; but she observed that such a step on his part was something wholly unprecedented, that he had never before had any such business in conjunction with her son, as could give rise to such a demand for so untimely an interview; and finally, she declared that she had a presentiment of evil such as on former occasions had never deceived her—forgetting, poor soul, that the infallibility of her presentiment, if trusted, must make her supplication necessarily of no avail. In support of the reasonableness of her fears, she entreated him to remember, says the chronicler, "the extreme indulgence of the times;" by which she meant the utter relaxation of all law and order, which made it unsafe for any man to traverse the streets of Rome after nightfall.

Francesco, however, was not to be deterred from doing as he proposed. No danger, he said, should prevent him from treating the brother of his adored Vittoria as his own, so he broke away from the weeping women, and went forth into the streets with one man bearing a torch before him. But the unhappy mother, clinging yet to the possibility of frustrating her infallible presentiment, as a last effort rushed after him, and catching him by his cloak flying in the night-wind, hurriedly poured into his ear all the grounds for misgiving, that the poor woman could not bring herself to speak out before her daughter-in-law. Was not this union of two such men as Marcello Accoramboni and the Mancino ominous of evil, both bandits, and both men stained with blood, as they were? For what good or lawful purpose could two such men want him in the streets of Rome at that hour of the night? Why had the Mancino, the bringer of this fatal letter, gone off in such a hurry, avoiding all questioning? If Marcello had been in need of defence from immediate danger, would he have sent away from him a man carrying arms, and accustomed to the use

of them, like the Mancino? But all these arguments, urged with the hot eloquence of affection and alarm, were fruitless. Ashamed, perhaps, of going back to his wife and telling her that he had thought better of facing those dangers she had told him of, and had decided on leaving her brother to his fate, he resisted all poor Camilla's entreaties, and hurried on his way.

He had reached the Monte Cavallo, and was near the top of the ascent, when three shots from an arquebuse were heard, and Peretti fell mortally wounded. In the next instant, four bravoes rushed up to the body and made sure of their work by repeated stabs with their daggers. The servant with the torch fled, and carried to the wife and mother the news of the fulfilment of that presentiment which the latter had been expressing to him only a few minutes before.

Of course the rest of the night passed in the murdered man's house in distracted lamentation. Vittoria vied with her mother-in-law in the violence and bitterness of her grief. But with early morning arrived the Cardinal di Montalto. The loss of his nephew was probably more severe than that sustained by either the widow or the childless mother. Those who do not know what the pride of family, and the desire of establishing a name and a race is in an Italian breast, will hardly understand how this should be so. They cannot tell what a nephew is to an ambitious churchman. Yet the old man entered the house with his accustomed grave calmness. He bade the women restrain the violence of their feelings, and cease to deplore the irrevocable. He caused the mangled body to be brought in from the public way where the murderers had left it, and prepared for its decent and seemly burial. "Such was the influence of his authority," writes the previously quoted chronicler, "that during the whole preparations and celebration of the funeral, nothing was heard from those women, or seen in their manner, other than what is seen in the case of ordinary deaths in well-regulated and wisely disciplined families."

It chanced that a Consistory of Cardinals had been appointed for the very next day after Francesco Peretti's murder. All Rome was of course talking of the deed; not simply of the fact that a man had been murdered on the Monte Cavallo during the past night—that was far too common an occurrence to excite much notice—but that the favourite nephew of the man, who it was universally expected would be pope, had been murdered; and that, as everybody at once suspected and cautiously whispered, by one of the most powerful nobles in Rome. For there seems to have been but little doubt in the public mind from the first, that Prince Paolo Giordano Orsini, Duke of Bracciano, was the author of his rival's death.

A curious feature, recurring again and again in every page of mediæval and modern Roman history, and strongly marked to the present day in the social aspects of the Eternal City, is a continual watchfulness, and cunning subtle deduction from it, and the corresponding

equally vigilant care to elude it. The minute circumstances and acts which are meditated and commented on, and the diplomatic caution with which those whose position draws men's eyes on them act in every detail of life, surprise the observer who belongs to a state of society constituted on different principles. He generally explains the phenomenon by attributing it to the simple frivolity of a people who have no larger interests to employ their thoughts. But the true explanation lies deeper among the fundamental principles of the Roman social system. The small matters thus spied out on the one hand, and hidden on the other, are of real importance in a society governed by privilege instead of by law. In proportion as law is weak and privilege powerful, individual will, character, and caprice become important. The cardinal has a nephew, and the nephew has a secretary, and the secretary has a fair friend, and the fair friend has a favourite maid, and the favourite maid has a lover, and the lover has a cousin, and the cousin may sell apples at the street corner perhaps. The apple-seller has in the all-destructive and demoralising hierarchy of privilege a certain amount of power as against some other poor devil less "protected" than himself. In every despotism the despot will be keenly watched by those subjected to his power. Cunning watchfulness is the natural arm of the unprotected weak against the unrestrained strong. But in Rome an altogether special perfection of cunning, hypocrisy, and guile is generated by the peculiarity of the circumstances that lead the great objects of spying watchfulness to be constantly on their guard against it, and to elude and delude it by unsleeping caution and secrecy. The lay despot of any other social system is studied and watched, but has rarely any such object before him as to make him care much to avoid the scrutiny. Every cardinal is living with a view to the papacy, if not absolutely in his own person, in that of the leading man of his party, whose success is all important to him. Hence every attempt to spy out the secret of a real emotion, to obtain a glimpse of the true desire or intention, to peer through some crevice in the screen of dissimulation and caution, is met by these cynosures of Roman eyes by a trained and practised secretiveness, which has thus, under the specious name of prudence, become one of the most admired and cultivated of accomplishments.

All Rome was thus on the watch, therefore, for some slip of bad play on the part of the Cardinal di Montalto, which might afford a momentary view of the cards he held, and a shrewd guess at his game.

Certainly the chance was a rare one. Everybody knew how wrapped up the old man was in the nephew who had been thus taken from him. It was impossible to doubt the severity of the blow. It was almost equally impossible to doubt that the cardinal must have pretty well known what hand had struck it. The world of Rome felt little or no doubt that the

formidable Duke of Bracciano was the murderer, if not by his own hand, by that of his hired assassins. Here, then, was a rare opportunity of observing the character and tendencies of the man who was expected to be shortly pope. Would grief and natural indignation be allowed to have their natural course? Would the future pope throw down the gauntlet to the most powerful and audacious subject in Rome?

THE UNCOMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.

ALLOW me to introduce myself—first, negatively.

No landlord is my friend and brother, no chambermaid loves me, no waiter worships me, no boots admires and envies me. No round of beef or tongue or ham is expressly cooked for me, no pigeon-pie is especially made for me, no hotel-advertisement is personally addressed to me, no hotel-room tapestried with great-coats and railway-wrappers is set apart for me, no house of public entertainment in the United Kingdom greatly cares for my opinion of its brandy or its sherry. When I go upon my journeys, I am not usually rated at a low figure in the bill; when I come home from my journeys, I never get any commission. I know nothing about prices, and should have no idea, if I were put to it, how to wheedle a man into ordering something he doesn't want. As a town traveller, I am never to be seen driving a vehicle externally like a young and volatile pianoforte van, and internally like an oven in which a number of flat boxes are baking in layers. As a country traveller, I am rarely to be found in a gig, and am never to be encountered by a pleasure train, waiting on the platform of a branch station, quite a Druid in the midst of a light Stonehenge of samples.

And yet—proceeding now, to introduce myself positively—I am both a town traveller and a country traveller, and am always on the road. Figuratively speaking, I travel for the great house of Human Interest Brothers, and have rather a large connexion in the fancy goods way. Literally speaking, I am always wandering here and there from my rooms in Covent-garden, London—now about the city streets: now, about the country bye-roads—seeing many little things, and some great things, which, because they interest me, I think may interest others.

These are my brief credentials as the Uncommercial Traveller. Business is business, and I start.

NEVER had I seen a year going out, or going on, under quieter circumstances. Eighteen hundred and fifty-nine had but another day to live, and truly its end was Peace on that sea-shore that morning.

So settled and orderly was everything seaward, in the bright light of the sun and under the transparent shadows of the clouds, that it was hard to imagine the bay otherwise, for years past or to come, than it was that very day. The

Tug-steamer lying a little off the shore, the Lighter lying still nearer to the shore, the boat alongside the Lighter, the regularly turning windlass aboard the Lighter, the methodical figures at work, all slowly and regularly heaving up and down with the breathing of the sea, all seemed as much a part of the nature of the place as the tide itself. The tide was on the flow, and had been for some two hours and a half; there was a slight obstruction in the sea within a few yards of my feet: as if the stump of a tree, with earth enough about it to keep it from lying horizontally on the water, had slipped a little from the land—and as I stood upon the beach and observed it dimpling the light swell that was coming in, I cast a stone over it.

So orderly, so quiet, so regular—the rising and falling of the Tug-steamer, the Lighter, and the boat—the turning of the windlass—the coming in of the tide—that I myself seemed, to my own thinking, anything but new to the spot. Yet, I had never seen it in my life, a minute before, and had traversed two hundred miles to get at it. That very morning I had come bowling down, and struggling up, hill-country roads; looking back at snowy summits; meeting courteous peasants, well to do, driving fat pigs and cattle to market; noting the neat and thrifty dwellings, with their unusual quantity of clean white linen, drying on the bushes; having windy weather, suggested by every cotter's little rick, with its thatch straw-ridged and extra straw-ridged into overlapping compartments, like the back of a rhinoceros. Had I not given a lift of fourteen miles to the Coast-Guardsman (kit and all), who was coming to his spell of duty there, and had we not just now parted company? So it was; but the journey seemed to glide down into the placid sea, with other chafe and trouble, and for the moment nothing was so calmly and monotonously real under the sunlight as the gentle rising and falling of the water with its freight, the regular turning of the windlass aboard the Lighter, and the slight obstruction so very near my feet.

O reader, haply turning this page by the fire-side at Home and hearing the night wind rumble in the chimney, that slight obstruction was the uppermost fragment of the Wreck of the Royal Charter, Australian trader and passenger ship, Homeward bound, that struck here on the terrible morning of the twenty-sixth of last October, broke into three parts, went down with her treasure of at least five hundred human lives, and has never stirred since!

From which point, or from which, she drove ashore, stern foremost; on which side, or on which, she passed the little Island in the bay, for ages henceforth to be aground certain yards outside her; these are rendered bootless questions by the darkness of that night and the darkness of death. Here she went down.

Even as I stood on the beach, with the words "Here she went down!" in my ears, a diver in his grotesque dress, dipped heavily over the side of the boat alongside the Lighter, and dropped

to the bottom. On the shore by the water's edge, was a rough tent, made of fragments of wreck, where other divers and workmen sheltered themselves, and where they had kept Christmas-day with rum and roast beef, to the destruction of their frail chimney. Cast up among the stones and boulders of the beach, were great spars of the lost vessel, and masses of iron twisted by the fury of the sea into the strangest forms. The timber was already bleached and the iron rusted, and even these objects did no violence to the prevailing air the whole scene wore, of having been exactly the same for years and years.

Yet, only two short months had gone, since a man, living on the nearest hill-top overlooking the sea, being blown out of bed at about day-break by the wind that had begun to strip his roof off, and getting upon a ladder with his nearest neighbour to construct some temporary device for keeping his house over his head, saw, from the ladder's elevation as he looked down by chance towards the shore, some dark troubled object close in with the land. And he and the other, descending to the beach, and finding the sea mercilessly beating over a great broken ship, had clambered up the stony ways like staircases without stairs, on which the wild village hangs in little clusters, as fruit hangs on boughs, and had given the alarm. And so, over the hill-slopes, and past the waterfall, and down the gullies where the land drains off into the ocean, the scattered quarrymen and fishermen inhabiting that part of Wales had come running to the dismal sight—their clergyman among them. And as they stood in the leaden morning, stricken with pity, leaning hard against the wind, their breath and vision often failing as the sleet and spray rushed at them from the ever forming and dissolving mountains of sea, and as the wool which was a part of the vessel's cargo blew in with the salt foam and remained upon the land when the foam melted, they saw the ship's life-boat put off from one of the heaps of wreck; and first, there were three men in her, and in a moment she capsized, and there were but two; and again, she was struck by a vast mass of water, and there was but one; and again, she was thrown bottom upward, and that one, with his arm struck through the broken planks and waving as if for the help that could never reach him, went down into the deep.

It was the clergyman himself from whom I heard this, while I stood on the shore, looking in his kind wholesome face as it turned to the spot where the boat had been. The divers were down then, and busy. They were "lifting" to-day, the gold found yesterday—some five-and-twenty thousand pounds. Of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds worth of gold, three hundred thousand pounds worth, in round numbers, was at that time recovered. The great bulk of the remainder was surely and steadily coming up. Some loss of sovereigns there would be, of course; indeed, at first sovereigns had drifted in with the sand, and been scattered far and wide over the beach, like sea-shells; but most

other golden treasure would be found. As it was brought up, it went aboard the Tug steamer, where good account was taken of it. So tremendous had the force of the sea been when it broke the ship, that it had beaten one great ingot of gold, deep into a strong and heavy piece of her solid iron-work: in which, also, several loose sovereigns that the ingot had swept in before it, had been found, as firmly embedded as though the iron had been liquid when they were forced there. It had been remarked of such bodies come ashore, too, as had been seen by scientific men, that they had been stunned to death, and not suffocated. Observation, both of the internal change that had been wrought in them, and of their external expression, showed death to have been thus merciful and easy. The report was brought, while I was holding such discourse on the beach, that no more bodies had come ashore since last night. It began to be very doubtful whether many more would be thrown up, until the north-east winds of the early spring set in. Moreover, a great number of the passengers, and particularly the second-class women-passengers, were known to have been in the middle of the ship when she parted, and thus the collapsing wreck would have fallen upon them after yawning open, and would keep them down. A diver made known, even then, that he had come upon the body of a man, and had sought to release it from a great superincumbent weight; but that, finding he could not do so without mutilating the remains, he had left it where it was.

It was the kind and wholesome face I have made mention of as being then beside me, that I had purposed to myself to see, when I left home for Wales. I had heard of that clergyman, as having buried many scores of the shipwrecked people; of his having opened his house and heart to their agonised friends; of his having used a most sweet and patient diligence for weeks and weeks, in the performance of the forlornest offices that Man can render to his kind; of his having most tenderly and thoroughly devoted himself to the dead, and to those who were sorrowing for the dead. I had said to myself, "In the Christmas season of the year, I should like to see that man!" And he had swung the gate of his little garden in coming out to meet me, not half an hour ago.

So cheerful of spirit, and guiltless of affectation, as true practical Christianity ever is! I read more of the New Testament in the fresh frank face going up the village beside me, in five minutes, than I have read in anathematising discourses (albeit put to press with enormous flourishing of trumpets), in all my life. I heard more of the Sacred Book in the cordial voice that had nothing to say about its owner, than in all the would-be celestial pairs of bellows that have ever blown conceit at me.

We climbed towards the little church, at a cheery pace, among the loose stones, the deep mud, the wet coarse grass, the outlying water, and other obstructions from which frost and snow had lately thawed. It was a mistake (my

friend was glad to tell me, on the way) to suppose that the peasantry had shown any superstitious avoidance of the drowned; on the whole, they had done very well, and had assisted readily. Ten shillings had been paid for the bringing of each body up to the church, but the way was steep, and a horse and a cart (in which it was wrapped in a sheet) were necessary, and three or four men, and, all things considered, it was not a great price. The people were none the richer for the wreck, for it was the season of the herring-shoal—and who could cast nets for fish, and find dead men and women in the draught?

He had the church keys in his hand, and opened the churchyard gate, and opened the church door; and we went in.

It is a little church of great antiquity; there is reason to believe that some church has occupied the spot, these thousand years or more. The pulpit was gone, and other things usually belonging to the church were gone, owing to its living congregation having deserted it for the neighbouring schoolroom, and yielded it up to the dead. The very Commandments had been shouldered out of their places, in the bringing in of the dead; the black wooden tables on which they were painted, were askew, and on the stone pavement below them, and on the stone pavement all over the church, were the marks and stains where the drowned had been laid down. The eye, with little or no aid from the imagination, could yet see how the bodies had been turned, and where the head had been and where the feet. Some faded traces of the wreck of the Australian ship may be discernible on the stone pavement of this little church, hundreds of years hence, when the digging for gold in Australia shall have long and long ceased out of the land.

Forty-four shipwrecked men and women lay here at one time, awaiting burial. Here, with weeping and wailing in every room of his house, my companion worked alone for hours, solemnly surrounded by eyes that could not see him, and by lips that could not speak to him, patiently examining the tattered clothing, cutting off buttons, hair, marks from linen, anything that might lead to subsequent identification, studying faces, looking for a scar, a bent finger, a crooked toe, comparing letters sent to him with the rain about him. "My dearest brother had bright grey eyes and a pleasant smile," one sister wrote. "O poor sister! well for you to be far from here, and keep that as your last remembrance of him!"

The ladies of the clergyman's family, his wife and two sisters-in-law, came in among the bodies often. It grew to be the business of their lives to do so. Any new arrival of a bereaved woman would stimulate their pity to compare the description brought, with the dread realities. Sometimes, they would go back, able to say, "I have found him," or, "I think she lies there." Perhaps, the mourner, unable to bear the sight of all that lay in the church, would be led in blindfold. Conducted to the spot with many com-

passionate words, and encouraged to look, she would say, with a piercing cry, "This is my boy!" and drop insensible on the insensible figure.

He soon observed that in some cases of women, the identification of person, though complete, was quite at variance with the marks upon the linen; this led him to notice that even the marks upon the linen were sometimes inconsistent with one another; and thus he came to understand that they had dressed in great haste and agitation, and that their clothes had become mixed together. The identification of men by their dress, was rendered extremely difficult, in consequence of a large proportion of them being dressed alike—in clothes of one kind, that is to say supplied by slopsellers and outfitters, and not made by single garments but by hundreds. Many of the men were bringing over parrots, and had receipts upon them for the price of the birds; others had bills of exchange in their pockets, or in belts. Some of these documents, carefully unwrinkled and dried, were little less fresh in appearance that day, than the present page will be under ordinary circumstances, after having been opened three or four times.

In that lonely place, it had not been easy to obtain even such common commodities in towns, as ordinary disinfectants. Pitch had been burnt in the church, as the readiest thing at hand, and the frying-pan in which it had bubbled over a brazier of coals was still there, with its ashes. Hard by the Communion-Table, were some boots that had been taken off the drowned and preserved—a gold-digger's boot, cut down the leg for its removal—a trodden down man's ankle-boots with a buff cloth top—and others—soaked and sandy, weedy and salt.

From the church, we passed out into the churchyard. Here, there lay, at that time, one hundred and forty-five bodies, that had come ashore from the wreck. He had buried them, when not identified, in graves containing four each. He had numbered each body in a register describing it, and had placed a corresponding number on each coffin, and over each grave. Identified bodies he had buried singly, in private graves, in another part of the churchyard. Several bodies had been exhumed from the graves of four, as relatives had come from a distance and seen his register; and, when recognised, these had been reburied in private graves, so that the mourners might erect separate headstones over the remains. In all such cases he had performed the funeral service a second time, and the ladies of his house had attended. There had been no offence in the poor ashes when they were brought again to the light of day; the beneficent Earth had already absorbed it. The drowned were buried in their clothes. To supply the great sudden demand for coffins, he had got all the neighbouring people handy at tools, to work the livelong day, and Sunday likewise. The coffins were neatly formed;—I had seen two, waiting for occupants, under the lee of the ruined walls of a stone hut on the beach, within call of the tent where the Christmas Feast was held.

Similarly, one of the graves for four was lying open and ready, here, in the churchyard. So much of the scanty space was already devoted to the wrecked people, that the villagers had begun to express uneasy doubts whether they themselves could lie in their own ground, with their forefathers and descendants, by-and-by. The churchyard being but a step from the clergyman's dwelling-house, we crossed to the latter; the white surplice was hanging up near the door, ready to be put on at any time, for a funeral service.

The cheerful earnestness of this good Christian minister was as consolatory, as the circumstances out of which it shone were sad. I never have seen anything more delightfully genuine than the calm dismissal by himself and his household of all they had undergone, as a simple duty that was quietly done and ended. In speaking of it, they spoke of it with great compassion for the bereaved; but laid no stress upon their own hard share in those weary weeks, except as it had attached many people to them as friends, and elicited many touching expressions of gratitude. This clergyman's brother—himself the clergyman of two adjoining parishes, who had buried thirty-four of the bodies in his own churchyard, and who had done to them all that his brother had done as to the larger number—must be understood as included in the family. He was there, with his neatly arranged papers, and made no more account of his trouble than anybody else did. Down to yesterday's post outward, my clergyman alone had written one thousand and seventy-five letters to relatives and friends of the lost people. In the absence of all self-assertion, it was only through my now and then delicately putting a question as the occasion arose, that I became informed of these things. It was only when I had remarked again and again, in the church, on the awful nature of the scene of death he had been required so closely to familiarise himself with for the soothing of the living, that he had casually said, without the least abatement of his cheerfulness, "indeed, it had rendered him unable for a time to eat or drink more than a little coffee now and then, and a piece of bread."

In this noble modesty, in this beautiful simplicity, in this serene avoidance of the least attempt to "improve" an occasion which might be supposed to have sunk of its own weight into my heart, I seemed to have happily come, in a few steps, from the churchyard with its open grave, which was the type of Death, to the Christian dwelling side by side with it, which was the type of Resurrection. I never shall think of the former, without the latter. The two will always rest side by side in my memory. If I had lost any one dear to me in this unfortunate ship, if I made a voyage from Australia to look at the grave in the churchyard, I should go away, thankful to God that that house was so close to it, and that its shadow by day and its domestic lights by night fell upon the earth in which its Master had so tenderly laid my dear one's head.

The references that naturally arose out of our conversation, to the descriptions sent down of shipwrecked persons, and to the gratitude of relations and friends, made me very anxious to see some of those letters. I was presently seated before a shipwreck of papers, all bordered with black, and from them I made the following few extracts.

A mother writes :

REVEREND SIR. Amongst the many who perished on your shore was numbered my beloved son. I was only just recovering from a severe illness, and this fearful affliction has caused a relapse, so that I am unable at present to go to identify the remains of the loved and lost. My darling son would have been sixteen on Christmas-day next. He was a most amiable and obedient child, early taught the way of salvation. We fondly hoped that as a British seaman he might be an ornament to his profession, but, "it is well;" I feel assured my dear boy is now with the redeemed. Oh, he did not wish to go this last voyage! On the fifteenth of October, I received a letter from him from Melbourne, date August twelfth; he wrote in high spirits, and in conclusion hesays: "Pray for a fair breeze, dear mamma, and I'll not forget to whistle for it; and, God permitting, I shall see you and all my little pets again. Good-by, dear mother—good-by, dearest parents. Good-by, dear brother." Oh, it was indeed an eternal farewell. I do not apologise for thus writing you, for oh, my heart is very sorrowful.

A husband writes :

MY DEAR KIND SIR. Will you kindly inform me whether there are any initials upon the ring and guard you have in possession, found, as the Standard says, last Tuesday? Believe me, my dear sir, when I say that I cannot express my deep gratitude in words sufficiently for your kindness to me on that fearful and appalling day. Will you tell me what I can do for you, and will you write me a consoling letter to prevent my mind from going astray?

A widow writes :

Left in such a state as I am, my friends and I thought it best that my dear husband should be buried where he lies, and, much as I should have liked to have had it otherwise, I must submit. I feel, from all I have heard of you, that you will see it done decently and in order. Little does it signify to us, when the soul has departed, where this poor body lies, but we who are left behind would do all we can to show how we loved them. This is denied me, but it is God's hand that afflicts us, and I try to submit. Some day I may be able to visit the spot, and see where he lies, and erect a simple stone to his memory. Oh! it will be long, long before I forget that dreadful night. Is there such a thing in the vicinity, or any shop in Bangor, to which I could send for a small picture of Moelfra or Llanallgo Church, a spot now sacred to me?

Another widow writes :

I have received your letter this morning, and do thank you most kindly for the interest you have taken about my dear husband, as well for the sentiments yours contains, evincing the spirit of a Christian who can sympathise for those who, like myself, are broken down with grief.

May God bless and sustain you, and all in connexion with you, in this great trial. Time may roll on and bear all its sons away, but your name as a disinterested person will stand in history, and,

as successive years pass, many a widow will think of your noble conduct, and the tears of gratitude flow down many a cheek, the tribute of a thankful heart, when other things are forgotten for ever.

A father writes :

I am at a loss to find words to sufficiently express my gratitude to you for your kindness to my son Richard upon the melancholy occasion of his visit to his dear brother's body, and also for your ready attention in pronouncing our beautiful burial service over my poor unfortunate son's remains. God grant that your prayers over him may reach the Mercy Seat, and that his soul may be received (through Christ's intercession) into heaven !

His dear mother begs me to convey to you her heartfelt thanks.

Those who were received at the clergyman's house, write thus, after leaving it :

DEAR AND NEVER-TO-BE-FORGOTTEN FRIENDS. I arrived here yesterday morning without accident, and am about to proceed to my home by railway.

I am overpowered when I think of you and your hospitable home. No words could speak language suited to my heart. I refrain. God reward you with the same measure you have meted with !

I enumerate no names, but embrace you all.

MY BELOVED FRIENDS. This is the first day that I have been able to leave my bedroom since I returned, which will explain the reason of my not writing sooner.

If I could only have had my last melancholy hope realised in recovering the body of my beloved and lamented son, I should have returned home somewhat comforted, and I think I could then have been comparatively resigned.

I fear now there is but little prospect, and I mourn as one without hope.

The only consolation to my distressed mind is in my having been so feelingly allowed by you to leave the matter in your hands, by whom I well know that everything will be done that can be, according to arrangements made before I left the scene of the awful catastrophe, both as to the identification of my dear son, and also his interment.

I feel most anxious to hear whether anything fresh has transpired since I left you; will you add another to the many deep obligations I am under to you by writing to me? And, should the body of my dear and unfortunate son be identified, let me hear from you immediately, and I will come again.

Words cannot express the gratitude I feel I owe to you all for your benevolent aid, your kindness, and your sympathy.

MY DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS. I arrived in safety at my house yesterday, and a night's rest has restored and tranquillised me. I must again repeat, that language has no words by which I can express my sense of obligation to you. You are enshrined in my heart of hearts.

I have seen him! and can now realise my misfortune more than I have hitherto been able to do. Oh, the bitterness of the cup I drink! But I bow submissive. God *must* have done right. I do not want to feel less, but to acquiesce more simply.

There were some Jewish passengers on board the Royal Charter, and the gratitude of the Jewish people is feelingly expressed in the following letter, bearing date from "the Office of the Chief Rabbi:—"

REVEREND SIR. I cannot refrain from expressing

to you my heartfelt thanks on behalf of those of my flock whose relatives have unfortunately been among those who perished at the late wreck of the Royal Charter. You have, indeed, like Boaz, "not left off your kindness to the living and the dead."

You have not alone acted kindly towards the living by receiving them hospitably at your house, and energetically assisting them in their mournful duty, but also towards the dead, by exerting yourself to have our co-religionists buried in our ground, and according to our rites. May our heavenly Father reward you for your acts of humanity and true philanthropy!

The "Old Hebrew congregation of Liverpool" thus express themselves through their secretary :

REVEREND SIR. The wardens of this congregation have learned with great pleasure that, in addition to those indefatigable exertions, at the scene of the late disaster to the Royal Charter, which have received universal recognition, you have very benevolently employed your valuable efforts to assist such members of our faith as have sought the bodies of lost friends to give them burial in our consecrated grounds, with the observances and rites prescribed by the ordinances of our religion.

The wardens desire me to take the earliest available opportunity to offer to you, on behalf of our community, the expression of their warm acknowledgments and grateful thanks, and their sincere wishes for your continued welfare and prosperity.

A Jewish gentleman writes :

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR. I take the opportunity of thanking you right earnestly for the promptness you displayed in answering my note with full particulars concerning my much-lamented brother, and I also herein beg to express my sincere regard for the willingness you displayed and for the facility you afforded for getting the remains of my poor brother exhumed. It has been to us a most sorrowful and painful event, but when we meet with such friends as yourself, it in a measure, somehow or other, abates that mental anguish, and makes the suffering so much easier to be borne. Considering the circumstances connected with my poor brother's fate, it does, indeed, appear a hard one. He had been away in all seven years; he returned four years ago to see his family. He was then engaged to a very amiable young lady. He had been very successful abroad, and was now returning to fulfil his sacred vow; he brought all his property with him in gold uninsured. We heard from him when the ship stopped at Queenstown, when he was in the highest of hope, and in a few short hours afterwards all was washed away.

Mournful in the deepest degree, but too sacred for quotation here, were the numerous references to those miniatures of women worn round the necks of rough men (and found there after death), those locks of hair, those scraps of letters, those many many slight memorials of hidden tenderness. One man cast up by the sea bore about him, printed on a perforated lace card, the following singular (and unavailing) charm :

A BLESSING.

May the blessing of God await thee. May the sun of glory shine around thy bed; and may the gates of plenty, honour, and happiness be ever open to thee. May no sorrow distress thy days; may no grief disturb thy nights. May the pillow of peace

kiss thy cheek, and the pleasures of imagination attend thy dreams; and when length of years makes thee tired of earthly joys, and the curtain of death gently closes around thy last sleep of human existence, may the Angel of God attend thy bed, and take care that the expiring lamp of life shall not receive one rude blast to hasten on its extinction.

A sailor had these devices on his right arm. "Our Saviour on the Cross, the forehead of the crucifix and the vesture stained red; on the lower part of the arm, a man and woman; on one side of the Cross, the appearance of a half moon, with a face; on the other side, the sun; on the top of the Cross, the letters I.H.S.; on the left arm, a man and woman dancing, with an effort to delineate the female's dress; under which, initials." Another seaman "had, on the lower part of the right arm, the device of a sailor and a female; the man holding the Union Jack with a streamer, the folds of which waved over her head, and the end of it was held in her hand. On the upper part of the arm, a device of Our Lord on the Cross, with stars surrounding the head of the Cross, and one large star on the side in Indian ink. On the left arm, a flag, a true lovers' knot, a face, and initials." This tattooing was found still plain, below the discoloured outer surface of a mutilated arm, when such surface was carefully scraped away with a knife. It is not improbable that the perpetuation of this marking custom among seamen, may be referred back to their desire to be identified, if drowned and flung ashore.

It was some time before I could sever myself from the many interesting papers on the table, and then I broke bread and drank wine with the kind family before I left them. As I had brought the Coast-guard down, so I took the Postman back, with his leathern wallet, walking-stick, bugle, and terrier dog. Many a heart-broken letter had he brought to the Rectory House within two months; many a benignantly postmarking answer had he carried back.

As I rode along, I thought of the many people, inhabitants of this mother country, who would make pilgrimages to the little churchyard in the years to come; I thought of the many people in Australia, who would have an interest in such a shipwreck, and would find their way here when they visit the Old World; I thought of the writers of all the wreck of letters I had left upon the table; and I resolved to place this little record where it stands. Convocations, Conferences, Diocesan Epistles, and the like, will do a great deal for Religion, I dare say, and Heaven send they may! but I doubt if they will ever do their Master's service half so well, in all the time they last, as the Heavens have seen it done in this bleak spot upon the rugged coast of Wales.

Had I lost the friend of my life, in the wreck of the Royal Charter; had I lost my betrothed, the more than friend of my life; had I lost my maiden daughter, had I lost my hopeful boy, had I lost my little child; I would kiss the hands that worked so busily and gently in the church, and say, "None better could have touched the

form, though it had lain at home." I could be sure of it, I could be thankful for it: I could be content to leave the grave near the house the good family pass in and out of every day, undisturbed, in the little churchyard where so many are so strangely brought together.

Without the name of the clergyman to whom—I hope, not without carrying comfort to some heart at some time—I have referred, my reference would be as nothing. He is the Reverend Stephen Roose Hughes, of Llanalgo, near Moelfra, Anglesey. His brother is the Reverend Hugh Robert Hughes, of Penrhos Alligwy.

MY BOYS.

I AM in the awful position of being the father of a large family of boys. If I were asked of how many, I should not be able to answer. I only know that they are all home for the holidays at once, at this present writing, that they are visited by "fellows" of their own age, and that with feelings of the strongest affection for my own offspring and of general philanthropy for the "fellows" before spoken of, I yet find myself occasionally referring to the almanack to see how many days longer it will be before "the boys" go back again to school.

"And why," asks some celibate, who reads these words—"why wish the holidays at an end?" My answer is simple; my boys are good boys enough, they are respectful and obedient, but I don't know what to do with them, and they, for their part, have not the remotest notion what to do with themselves. There is something in this one respect radically wrong about the boys of this generation. They want purpose. They don't play at anything. The younger ones even, have not imagination enough to carry out a self-delusion through half a day together, as I used to do. I have all my life been fond of horses; but I can solemnly declare that I have, in early youth, enjoyed a ride upon a harnessed chair, elaborately prepared with stirrups and bridle of my own construction, and with spurs which derived their existence from the same source, with my cloak rolled up in front of me—it was unfurled and put on, though, when that fearful storm came on which overtook me on the heath—with stoppages to bait and easily achieved payments of ostlers, consisting in the insertion of a finger and thumb into an imaginary waistcoat-pocket and the depositing of a shilling, bright from Imagination's mint, on that particular portion of that particular piece of furniture which did duty for the official's hand—rides such as these, I say, diversified by that fearful night encounter with highwaymen, and rescue of the distressed lady in the wood, I have enjoyed a million times more than the excursions of after life, when I have sat upon a real saddle, have had my feet in real stirrups, and have had a real quadruped between them. Playing at horses has declined, perhaps, with the decay of stage-coaches.

Why don't my boys—the bigger ones—scoop out ships, as I used, and go thoroughly into the

question of rigs? Why don't they make little blocks, as I used, out of firewood—the honourable penknife scars are on my fingers yet. If they want a cutter or a schooner now, they must go and buy it at a shop, and get an uninteresting toy of a thing, which they have no vital interest in as a work of their own construction, and which they pay an enormous sum of money for, into the bargain. And this brings me, by-the-by, to another characteristic of my boys. Money—they are always wanting money, and in such vast amounts. I don't think they would take a sixpence. I once had a sixpence as a child, and was kept awake two nights following, thinking how I should invest it; my boys, I solemnly believe, would not fall heavily to the ground in a vertigo of surprise and awe if I were to give them a golden sovereign apiece.

Why don't my boys get "characters" and go mad with joy in colouring and tinselling them? The planting of golden graves upon the legs of Mr. Osbaldiston as Hotspur, is a pleasure of a kind unknown to this generation, and the want of which is no light or trifling loss. Why don't they make theatres and enact dramas, and push the military on in strips, and work the curtain with a tackle of their own inventing, and stage-manage, and prompt, and speak the dialogue all at once, as boys ought?

Why, last summer, when my old friend Hearty was staying with me in the country, at the time of the Midsummer holidays, we set to work one day to make a kite for the boys! Bless my life and soul, but Hearty and I were eager and excited men that day, and were to be found rushing about the house, and even all over the village, in search of laths, paper, paste, string, and all the other necessary ingredients of a kite. You would have thought that Hearty, who is a distinguished lawyer, had been making kites all his life, and that he had never heard in the whole course of his career of such a thing as a "rule nisi," or the proving of domicile; the only thing in which his professional qualities came out at all, being in a brisk and somewhat fierce argument with me on the relative merits of the diamond-shaped kite, and the kite with a curved top: about which we almost quarrelled. Here was this eminent (and elderly) man entangling himself in furlongs of string, sticking himself to sheets of newspaper with accidental paste, cutting his fingers in notching his laths, and generally in such a state of eagerness about the kite as it would have refreshed any person of well-regulated mind to observe!

And what were my boys about, all this time? Were they eager? Were they excited? Hang it, were they even interested? Not a bit. They deserted us. They actually deserted us. They went and yawned about the stable. They read the advertisements in Bradshaw's Guide. After the first few minutes they ceased to take any share in the undertaking which had been got up solely with a view to their amusement.

Then, when the kite was at last completed, when it proved lop-sided, and had to be weighted with cunningly devised wings; when, this being

set right, it manifested a suicidal desire to "pitch," coming headforemost to the earth with a mighty crash just at the hopeful moment of its flight; when this tendency was remedied by the tying of a rich India silk handkerchief of Hearty's to the end of the tail; and when the kite (there was a high wind), now without a fault, sprang into the sky, without warning, and snapping the string flew straight over the top of the house and lodged in the tallest tree in the shrubbery at the back, who was it at these times that manifested emotion? Who was it that was alternately hopeful and despairing, triumphant and cast down? Who was it that devised and executed the different remedies for the different disasters as soon as they occurred? Was it any of my boys? Was it one of the "fellows" who were staying with them? No, it was Hearty and I who did all these things, and finally, when the kite had to be recovered from unheard of altitudes in the shrubbery, it was Hearty who mounted the tree, and it was I (the father of the family) who gave him a leg up.

And now, having shown what my boys will *not* do, suppose we inquire for a moment what they *will* do. Will they sit about upon easy-chairs? Oh yes. Will they haunt landing-places, and halls, and passages, and reply, when asked if they are going out, that they don't know? Oh yes. Will they disport themselves vaguely upon staircases? Oh yes. Will they charge up and down the same, will they bluntly bump against my study door (I am a studious man), and bulge with crashes against the wooden banisters? Oh yes. Will they do this when the weather is fine and they might be out of doors, but prefer remaining in; and will they in the same state of the temperature read (evidently without knowing or caring what) throughout a whole day, and look swollen, pale, sleepy, and stupefied thereafter? Yes, good sir, they will do all these things, and many more.

They will go to the play with Hearty and myself, and while we are convulsed with mirth at Mr. Buckstone's acting, they will not move a muscle. Say, that the performance of the consummate artist just named, may be over their heads; well, sir, we take them to see a Pantomime. Are they astounded at the transformation scene? Are the extraordinary resources of Mr. Sketcherby, which seem to know no limit, a subject of astonishment to them? Is the Harlequin a marvel of agility, the Columbine a vision of loveliness, are the Clown and Pantaloon embodiments of the humorous—to my boys? Oh dear no! They slept peacefully on the night preceding this visit to the play, they were able to eat their dinners, and to discuss other subjects than pantomimic subjects on the day of the treat(?) itself, whilst, on their return home, the performance was severely reviewed by these youngsters as they sat at supper, and was treated—not only critically but contemptuously. When I think of my own boyhood, and remember my introduction to theatrical amusements, when I remember a fevered infant who was unable to sleep, and who refused nourishment from the

moment that the play-going project was first discussed; when I remember these things, I lay my hand upon my breast, and bless my stars that I was born before the present cent—Suppose we change the subject.

Another thing that my boys will do, deserves attention. They will answer advertisements which appear in the newspapers, and by which they are informed that for eighteenpence (in stamps) they can have forwarded to them, by post, Herr Schvindler's celebrated wedding-ring trick, and they will summon their friends to witness the performance of the same. It is then that the following phenomena are observed. My boy Thomas shows me a small brass curtain ring, and asks me if it is all right? I mercifully assent at once, upon which, emboldened by my leniency, he begs the loan of my silk pocket-handkerchief. On my falling into his views in this respect also, he ties up the curtain ring in the end of the pocket-handkerchief. He then asks an assistant to procure him a cap. This cap (the spectators are all breathless with excitement) he holds with his teeth over his hands, and very slowly, and with much effort, unties the handkerchief again, drops the cap, and with much triumph shows us the ring in one hand, and the handkerchief in the other. This is all. This is the wedding-ring trick as performed by my son. He ties up a brass ring in a pocket-handkerchief before the world, and unties it again behind a cap. (The discomfiture of the boy was so tremendous at our disappointment, that Hearty gave him one and sixpence on the spot, with a friendly caution to be wiser next time.)

Now, I want some system devised which shall occupy my boys' holiday-time with wholesomer and better pastime than answering Herr Schvindler's advertisements. I want some scheme to be hit upon, which shall keep them alive and spry at their amusements, and give them a keen relish for the pleasures which I am willing to afford them. I ask again, then, what is to be done with my boys during the holidays? They get on well enough at school; I have the most satisfactory accounts of them from their masters; They know a great many things which I don't know. But there is one thing they do not know, and that is what to do with themselves in the holidays. The question is, whether we, the united parents of Great Britain, might not concoct some arrangement which should get them out of this difficulty, and off our staircases, at one and the same moment?

Suppose—I am speaking now, only to those parents and guardians who live in London, and whose boys come home for the holidays to the metropolis—suppose we were to organise some establishment supported by subscriptions, which would provide these youngsters with some regular and definite holiday occupation. I am not speaking of lessons. I am not such a blood-thirsty wretch as to suggest so cruel a proceeding as the infliction of holiday tasks. No; what I want, is some sort of institution to which boys should go, during the holidays, for a certain num-

ber of hours every day, and where they should spend a certain amount of time in bodily exercise and sports, but be obliged to carry out what they begin fully, and never be allowed to indulge in listlessness or inaction.

The boy's mind is sent to school during the greater part of the year; let his body be sent to school during the holidays. Let us have in every district of London, large buildings or enclosures, set apart for the use of boys who are home for the holidays. Let the workshop, the playground, the gymnasium, and the dining-hall, be found within its walls. Let active superintendents be present; not to bother the boys, but to keep them going—to keep them engaged in every kind of exercise, sport, and pastime, likely to tend to their bodily development, and to lead them on to small undertakings in the carpentering or mechanical line for which they may seem to manifest any inclination. How good it would be for these boys, to have such works in progress, and to have to *return to them day after day, till they were completed*. For, everything once begun should perforce be finished, and not so much as a wooden sword left without its hilt. Then, again, is not this an age of great military fervour, and are not civilians of all kinds for ever thinking of their drills and their rifle-practice? The rifle-dress is seen in our streets; the glare of the bayonet-tip is to be observed peeping from under the Inverness cape of the Volunteer as he returns from drill; the Six-foot Volunteer Guards are rearing their lofty and intellectual heads in the air; and even the insults of the insurance offices, whose secretaries advertise that no additional premium will be required from members of Rifle Corps, as it is not thought that the risk of a gentleman's life is materially increased by his joining one of these warlike combinations—even such insults as these, are insufficient to check the bellicose spirit of the age. Nay, why should I attempt to conceal the fact that I, who write these pages, am myself a member of a Rifle Club; that I spend two hours a day (in company with several other gentlemen) in standing on one leg, and swinging the other backward and forward without letting it touch the ground; in making quarter turns to the right, and half turns to the left; in learning to clasp my hands in the exact manner considered right for standing at ease; and, in a word, in generally preparing myself, as well as a man can, for firing from behind ambushes, from immense distances, and for engaging in a perfectly irregular style of warfare.

Now, why should my boys be left out of all this? What a good thing it would be for *them* to be drilled during the holidays. What a capital and profitable occupation for their spare time. If we are all expected to be soldiers when we grow up, surely we cannot begin too soon.

But, this establishment, which I am so desirous of organising, might comprise other branches of instruction. Why not have a class for riding, a class for public speaking (limited), a class for carving, and a French conversation, or moral-

cowardice-eradication class? These two last branches of this very important institution would be quite invaluable. What is a man who cannot carve, but a burden to himself, a delusion to the hostess at whose right hand he sits, and a disfigurement of the foot of his own table?

How can he entertain his guests with conversation? How can he enliven the lady next him with light badinage, when the separating process needed for a quarter of lamb, is passing heavily on his mind, and vague speculations as to the exact nature of the anatomy of the wild duck are looming upon him in the distance? Now, this carving class would render such distressing situations impossible. Of course it would be necessary to the carrying out of this part of my project, that the boys should dine on the premises. I have not a word to say to the contrary. The trouble of getting up that early meal is very great, and the unhallowed smells of noontide cookery in the house, and the large dishes set down outside my study door, are a great annoyance to me, as I not unfrequently step into the gravy as I come out, and invariably lose my appetite for the late dinner, from being tempted to take a "cut off the joint" in the middle of the day. By all means let them dine at the "Institute," and as Bacon relates that they who would learn to dance well are used to *practise* in thick shoes, but to *perform* in thin ones, so let blunt knives be provided for our young friends in the case under consideration, and let tough joints and birds advanced in years be advertised for in the different public prints.

And if a man is in a pickle who cannot carve (as he certainly is), what shall we say of him who is unable to discourse in the French language? I see him when a French joke is related in society, sitting by in hopeless ignorance, or hypocritically pretending to enjoy it with an excess of laughter which is perhaps given way to before the crisis comes, lest he should be too late, and which at all events takes nobody in but himself. Or, take him into a room where, a foreigner being present, the conversation is carried on in French, and let us see how he looks. Put him, again, on the other side of the Channel; see him cheated, deceived, despised, and unable to defend his rights by a word; and say whether the spluttering, gesticulating, and generally trampled upon wretch, with *Télémaque* at his fingers' ends, but not a word of the language in which that exciting romance is written, at the end of his tongue; say whether he is not an object of pity for all nations, and a standing illustration of the importance of that French conversation class whose merits I am advocating. It must not be forgotten, too, that the eradication of moral-cowardice—the most disastrous of stumbling-blocks to boy or man, and one peculiarly active towards the ruin of the inhabitants of this island—would also be materially assisted by this French conversation class; and surely that, alone, would be no small object gained.

I am far—very far—from wishing that this

Holiday Occupation Institute should be a work-a-day affair. There should, on the contrary, be every facility for play, but none for idleness. There should be every inducement to amateur carpentering, boat-scooping, ship-building, and card-board carriage manufacturing, that could stimulate the adolescents who should frequent the place to amuse themselves—only they should always have a purpose, always be doing something, and, even if only playing a game at rounders, should be made to finish it.

LUNACY IN CONSTANTINOPLE.

I HAD obtained the Sultan's permission to visit the Government Madhouse—the *Demir-Khan*—as the Turks call it. I dreaded, and yet I was anxious for the sight.

I was to accompany a Doctor Legoff, a Georgian born at Teflis, and attached to the Russian Embassy, who was endeavouring to rouse the Sick Man and his ministers to the necessity of introducing the European system of treating the insane, into the asylums in Constantinople, of which this was the chief. We took two hacks at the door of the Foreign-office and, followed by our two running footmen, were soon threading the torrent-bed streets of the filthy Jews' Quarter, on our way to the *Demir-Khan*, where a mad world had shut up some of the more flagrant and eccentric of its inhabitants. As we rode along, on those terrible Turkish saddles that propel you forward on the pommel (the huge iron scrapers or shoes being hung so far behind the perpendicular line), the doctor, who is a trifle pedantic, and belabours you with a good deal of dog Latin, useful to conceal ignorance and astonish the vulgar, told me that the *Demir-Khan*, like the Greek and other lunatic asylums of the city, was far behind the times. Mere cases of drunken delirium, or temporary aberration, were thrust in there, without any hope of release. All classes of patients were herded together, cruel restraints were still occasionally used, the keepers were cruel and treated the patients as criminals. The asylum was not clean, ablutions were rare, and there was no amusement to relieve and occupy the mind, or to avert paroxysms. Indeed, so far was recreation from being considered, that the only room which commanded a fine view of the Bosphorus and Golden Horn, although the Turks are universally and innately fond of scenery, even to a passion, was barred from the patients and left unused. True, the heavy "catenæ or fetters" (belt and collar) of ten years since were abandoned, but there was still rumour of underground cells, and of many remains of old barbarism and cruelty. He, Dr. Legoff, therefore, was desirous of drawing up a report of this asylum and of the condition of its patients, that he might state the ameliorations desirable to be effected. I jolted on and said nothing. I knew very well, that the indolent Sultan, wearied by the perpetual reforms suggested by Europeans, has a way, after endless

audiences and petitions, of staving them off by requesting the delighted men to visit such and such an establishment, and draw up a long report, which is handed over to the vizier for consideration. This consideration takes so long, however, that the affair never goes any further.

We have done jogging along, and are there. It is a large building—once, perhaps, a pasha's house—close to the great mosque of Sulieman, which far exceeds St. Sophia both in internal and external beauty. Our boy-grooms stop a man with his long pipe stuck down his back for safety, the red bowl rising slanting from between his shoulders, and ask him where the entrance door is? The man angrily growls something about "Satan and infidels," and asks if they take him for a patient that has escaped? A second fellow, passing with a stand of roasted Indian corn, yellow and mealy, shows us the gate we desire, and we beat for admittance, looking through the bars into a garden and a long passage ending in an archway and court beyond.

There is much parley at the door, which drives Doctor Legoff to violent Ciceronianisms in dog Latin, and to energetic protests drawn from a combination of Delectus, Latin Grammar, and the drawer-labels of chemists' shops. He swears that the Turkish porter, an old man who tumbles out of a lodge paved with a feather-bed, must have had more than aqua pura that morning; he declares that it is stark dementia to exclude a Government commissioner; that the porter is a fatuous old senex, februous with opium, with paralysis supervening; that he (Dr. Legoff) will get in even if there is blood-letting, for he must and will see Doctor Tricoupi, the physician of the establishment.

Leaving his brass waiter full of rice and fowl, and his pipe, and thimbleful of black coffee, the old porter at last puts on his red slippers and toddles off, fussy Polonius and pantaloons that he is, to tell his master of the strangers, as he might have done ten minutes ago.

We pass down the paved passage, and through a portico where some quiet patients are sitting, and where servants of the madhouse are drawing skinfuls of water from the fountain, and are shown into a little bare room, in the corner of a yard, where the doctor receives us. Tricoupi is not a bit like one of our own oiled, and scented, and bland, and dulcet, flattering, fashionable doctors; on the contrary, he is a short, small, quiet, sharp-nosed Italian, kindly and rather cautious in manner. A black boy presents us, on bended knee, and with a conventional sweep and flourish, first, a chibouk, and then a little cup of burning hot black coffee, à la Turque. To the saffron threads hanging over the great red saucer-bowls of the chibouks that rest on the floor, another boy, running in like an elf, squeezing a glowing lump of charcoal between a small pair of silver tongs, brings flames and fires.

I am sure, from Tricoupi's restless manner, and the hurried way in which he shows us specimens of mad artisans' handicraft, that he knows our visit bodes him no good, and that we are, in fact,

come to report on the imperfections of the system which he personifies. I dare say, if he dared, he would poison us in the coffee, or throw us to some raging, shaven Orson of a Turkish madman. So he casts down his eyes and fences with Legoff, who tries to look friendly and innocent, and unobservant and admiring. He parries all our questions, and never even mentions a certain entry-book of cases. But one thing he dare not smother up or refuse, and that is, the madmen themselves. Legoff has power to go anywhere in the Demir-Khan, and asking astute Tricoupi's leave is a mere ceremony.

We entered the large court-yard of the Demir-Khan, in the centre of which stood a plane-tree and a covered fountain. Round this quadrangle ran a dirty paved cloister, upon which opened the doors of small cells on one side, and on the other the doors of general dormitories and the bath-rooms. From these little huts, listlessly—from the bars of the windows, fiercely—from idle groups squatting with their backs to the wall, torpidly—everywhere madmen's faces met ours. "Doing nothing," said Legoff, with a sigh; "no amusement; no occupation; nothing to remove the strain, and wear off the one dominant idea that has subjected all the rest."

Tricoupi took the bright view of things, and patted a ferocious-looking Hercules of a Turk we were passing, on the back. "You see," he said, "the religion of my poor invalids makes them patient. Paroxysms are much less rare than with you in Europe. 'Chismet' (it is decreed), they say; and resign themselves to fetters and the shower-bath."

Suddenly, Tricoupi, waving aside the pale absorbed-looking men who paced up and down the cloister, regardless of our presence, or listening eagerly but vacantly to Legoff's general groans at the Turkish system of managing the insane, flung open the door of a small cell. We looked in, and saw, sitting on a small, poor pallet, in a little whitewashed cabin of a room, a tall, stiff-necked, gentlemanly man, of some forty years old. His head and neck were bandaged, and the white cloth gave great lustre to his dark black moustache and thick curling beard, and even to his serious deep-sunk eyes, that were fixed on us pitifully yet irrationally. Tricoupi asked after his health, and he returned some restless, complaining, irrelevant answer.

"That," said Tricoupi, turning to us, and lecturing upon the man as if he were a waxwork figure, "is a Persian gentleman, whose mind became afflicted from some decay of his circumstances. Last week, being forbidden tobacco by his doctor, he cut his throat in bed, leaving on the table a letter stating that he had done the deed himself, fearing his servant might be accused of the crime." As he spoke, the Persian gentleman bent his neck to us stiffly, as if guessing the purport of our conversation.

On our way to the next cell, Tricoupi stopped a moment before a row of men squatting along the foot of the wall, to point out to us a young Nubian black, with a thin, and face—the face of a mad Puritan: so rapt and introspective were

his eyes, so regardless and forgetful of earth. He was of an olive black, his lips were dark, his eyes were ashy, and he wore a blanket, which left half his bony chest bare. This was a young howling Dervish; perhaps some pasha's eunuch turned fanatic, who, having abandoned himself headlong to austerities, and to the hideous demoniacal rites of his fraternity (in which foolish travellers find only matter for ridicule), had suddenly been seized by the notion that he had won by his howls and mortifications the dignity of sainthood, and therefore refusing to speak, he surrendered himself to divine influences. Why he should be imprisoned for this conceit I could not see, and I looked with pity at the immovable, imperturbable black enthusiast.

"You have now seen our religious madness," said Tricoupi. "You shall next see our pride sunk into insanity. This is a common form of Turkish madness."

The cell was unbolted by a brutal-looking turnkey, who wore a dirty soldier's dress, and at his approach I observed the madmen crouched and trembled. We saw, leaning against the window, seated cross-legged on a rude divan covered with some coarse shawling, a venerable and sagacious-looking old man, with preternaturally bright eyes, and a crisp silvery beard cascading over his dull purple robe. He might have been Haroun-al-Raschid grown old, or Ali Pasha, the Pasha of Albania, with his head glued on again, he bore himself so grandly. He was acting the Sultan: that was his insanity. He looked at us as we entered, with infinite contempt; he knew we looked upon him as a mere claimant and pretender to power, but he despised us. Tricoupi humoured him by making a salaam, and requested him to write us a firman. He gave it us, but with the air of a man who, though confident of greatness, is the object of ridiculous suspicion. We bowed ourselves out very carefully, and with a half spite the malignant turnkey bolted the doors, for the Sultan was at times violent and highly dangerous if treated with any want of respect. Poor old man, happy in his delusion!

We had just visited one of the dormitories, when a little peasant child, a cretin, wearing only a coarse tunic of sackcloth, ran to greet us. As he leaped up and down with bare feet upon the stones, kissing our hands, and putting the hems of our coats to his lips—the brutal turnkey, laughing all the time at the drollery of the thing, and at the pleasantry of nature in giving us such children—Legoff was phrenologically feeling the idiot's head, and pointing with a lecturer's horror to the hollow cup of forehead, and at the enormous boss of a cerebellum. We gave the poor child a piastre, and he instantly flew off like a deer to buy bread, crowing and laughing.

"Not half fed," said Legoff.

A moment afterwards, we saw him racing back to a cell at the opposite corner of the square to share the bread with his guardian: a tall, haggard Turk, who had remained two years without speaking, believing himself bewitched. We saw

the child crouching at his feet in the doorway, smiling as the attentive friend first chewed the baked rings of bread strewn with grains of sesame, and then crammed them into his pupil's mouth, just as if he were feeding a young owl.

It was while we were still watching this operation—Legoff scornfully, Tricoupi with assumed bonhomie—that a madman came up and accosted us. His face, like the rest, wore the agonised, purgatorial stare of changeless insanity that some mad faces always wear.

"This," said Tricoupi, "is a most curious instance of the decay of some regulating mental principle. Body of Bacehus! He imagines his name changes every minute to that of some dead sultan. I will try him."

Tricoupi put the question. The man jogged his turban, and put his head on one side, as if trying to listen, or to remember. In a moment he answered, boldly, "Bejaset." We repeated the question slowly; he looked as if he were watching a turning roulette wheel, and replied, "Amurath;" a third time, and he said, "Mahmoud." It was a trifling madness for a world of eccentric people to shut you up for. Why not for picture-buying, or coin-collecting, or walking-stick mania, or for having a fancy for old china?

We had scarcely got quit of this madman, when a thoughtful-looking man, with much of the air of a gentleman, came up to us, and with the air of one who has long been embarrassed with a topic, but at last begins to see daylight in the distance, said in good Turkish to Dr. Tricoupi, who patted him on the back, to keep up his paternal character before the commissioner:

"I have decided on two millions."

I asked what the madman meant by his having decided on two millions?

The doctor, leaving his mad friend adding up the two millions on his brown fingers, told me that the man was a Turkish doctor who, in a frenzy, had murdered at once his father, mother, and two children. The two millions was the indemnity he had agreed upon, after much reflection, as the compensation the Porte was to pay him for his professional losses during detention. The murders he had quite forgotten, and his crazed mind was now absorbed in complicated compound addition.

"There," said Tricoupi, pointing with an affectionate smile to a very ugly old Turk, who was drivelling in the last stage of idioey in a corner of the cloister, a little alarmed at the turnkey, but otherwise not more wise than an old baboon, "that is the effect of excessive opium. And here"—turning to a lively, healthy-looking young Turk at his elbow—"is an instance of a cessation from the excessive use of the same drug; Achmet will soon get his release."

"Allah be praised!" said the young Turk, his eyes moistening with a sudden gush of grateful tears.

We next inspected the bath-rooms, where, upon violent patients and on new comers, small Niagaras are crushed down from great

heights; then we moved on with government-commission formality to the miserable dining-rooms, imperfectly glazed, and with the beautiful prospect boarded out, much to Dr. Legoff's righteous indignation. Then we went to the sick-ward, where we found two men washing their faces, and whispering with hideous witch glee in a conspiracy mutter; now and then, as they turned and looked at us, breaking out into "fatuous laughter," as Legoff, always longing to pick a hole in the establishment, called it. From these poor wretches we were drawn by the querulous tears and prayers of a poor old man, who rose from his bed to entreat us for aid, for he was torn with pain, and as he spoke, he writhed and struggled as with an enemy. Coldly, and as a matter of course, the commission, deaf and dumb, passed by on the other side.

"Old man dying of sheer inanition and want of vital power," said Legoff.

"He is a troublesome, bad fellow," said the turnkey. "He eats his food as well as any of them, gentlemen."

Turnkeys are generally offended by any sympathy evinced for those under their care.

As we passed out by the yellow-washed fountain into the outer portico, we found the turnkeys watching a quiet calm Turk, who, under a network trellis of vines in the outer portico of the madhouse, sat patiently at his task of illuminating a sheet of white paper in the Persian manner. He hardly looked up as he saw us, but, with a self-satisfied smile went on with his curving flowers, and azure flourishes, and crimson tendrils, which made the cretin boy clap his hands and stamp his naked feet with delight, and even the bewitched man to smile gravely: though as for the negro saint, nothing could allure him from his fakir attitude and meditative torpor.

"That poor fellow," said Tricoupi, as we walked back to the doctor's smoking-room, "is a house-painter. At home he tears everything to pieces, and threatens to murder his wife and children; but directly he is brought here he becomes soothed and tranquil, and sits down to his illumination. I have much of his work here (taking down a roll of drawings); and it is remarkable that all these were executed by him without sketch or measurement. He begins at the left-hand side of the paper, and covers it all over with a perfect, harmonious, well-balanced pattern."

As we rode musingly home, we talked, now of the mad painter, now of the mad Turkish doctor: Dr. Legoff impressing upon me the necessity of instant reform in the Demir-Khan, and especially of ousting that false, self-reliant, ignorant man, Dr. Tricoupi (whom I rather liked, but dare not tell Legoff so). My violent medical friend then began talking of the state of the government madhouse we had just seen when he visited

it first, twenty-six years ago. It was bad enough now, with its unglazed windows, dirty pigeon-infested roofs, unclassified maniacs, brutal turnkeys; it was without padded rooms, amusements, or annual inspection. Men were still picked up raving in the street, and thrown in there, and left to come out when they could persuade cruel people, interested in their detention, that they were sane. "In the very first room," he said, "that he visited in 1833, there were four men chained by massive iron collars to rings in the four corners. They were crouched on the sunken stone floor, benumbed with cold, nothing on but a scanty blanket; their eyes were staring and fierce, their mouths sullen and savage. The first he spoke to, said he should be quite well if outside the walls; that, two years before, he had been brought in when drunk, and that he was no more crazy than the keeper. The second told him he was a captain in the Turkish army, and had been brought there when delirious with fever. He did not know why he was still imprisoned, but there was no appeal to be made. In the next cell was a half-naked Turk, an idiot, dying of dysentery. There he sat, careless of death, shivering with cold, yet chattering like an ape to himself, and breaking out every now and then into shrieks of laughter. Close by him, sat a young man with the face of an apostle—as Mr. Willis, the American writer, who saw him, truly observed. He had tied up his chain to the grating, to relieve himself of the weight. The cells were all cold, wet, filthy, and miserable. The inmates were fed, like beasts, at certain hours, and the doors of their cells kept open, that visitors might indulge their curiosity. The keeper, with stolid indifference, showed (he remembered) one poor wretch, a dervish, who had been chained in the same corner for twenty years. He never slept for more than a few minutes, and repeated prayers incessantly; his hair was tangled like a wild beast's mane, his nails had grown to claws. Near him was a well-dressed, rational-looking, renegade Greek, who told Willis he had lost his reason, and was glad that he was carefully confined. The boys who came with the visitors tormented him cruelly by looking through the grating of the cell and pulling his chain."

The next madhouse I visited in Constantinople, was the Greek one:—a far better one, as I shall show in my next.

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